

CHRISTIAN SENTIMENTS

PROPER FOR
SICK and INFIRM
PEOPLE,

In order to sanctify their SOULS in their
ILLNESS, and prepare themselves for a
HAPPY DEATH, expressed in the Words
of SCRIPTURE and the FATHERS.

Translated from the FRENCH.

To which is added,

The DOCTRINE of the
HOLY FATHERS,
On HEAVEN, HELL and
PURGATORY.

Tho.^s Barr O.S.B. P.C.

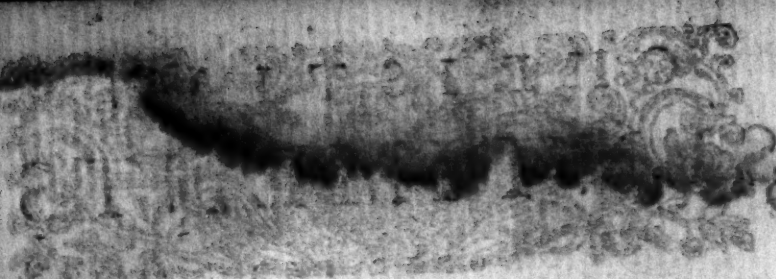
*Infirmities Carnis, si patienter Justineatur, est quasi
Purgatorius Ignis.*

V. Beda, in suis Proverb. Verb. Infirmis. Pag. 191.

L O N D O N:

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THE DOCTORS OF THE
HOLY TRINITY
OF HEAVEN, HELL and
PUNGATORY
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T H E
P R E F A C E.



L L the World has an equal Interest in learning the Christian Sentiments proper for the different States of Sufferings thro' which we may pass; and amidst the several Tribulations, to which the Life of Man is obnoxious, we cannot too much accustom ourselves to the Practice of Virtues, of which every Christian would wish, at the Hour of his Death, to have had contracted a holy Habit, in order to be in a Condition to sustain the hard and terrible Trials which precede and attend that last Moment of our Life.

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In Effect, as there is nothing more certain than Death, nothing more common than the Infirmities and Sufferings which are the Forerunners of it, nothing more dreadful and terrible than the Judgment of a God which follows it; these three Objects require all the Attention of a Christian, and he ought often to call them to mind during his Health, to dispose himself to bear, with Merit, the Afflictions and Sufferings of this Life, to receive Death with a Spirit of Obedience, and to look on his Submission to the Judgment of the Lord as a Part of his Crown.

I must confess that these Objects are enough to shake the Constancy of mortal Man; but it belongs to Christian Prudence and Wisdom to foresee the Evils which he cannot avoid, that by this Foresight he may guard against whatever surprises, frightens and overwhelms those who are found unprepared. Let us add still, that if a Christian does not take care to anticipate and excite in his own Heart by serious Reflexions the Sentiments

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timents in which he would wish to die; if he do not accustom himself to this during the Days of his Life and Health, if his Memory be not fill'd with these holy Thoughts, if his Heart be not penetrated with these lively Affections, if he do not contract a Habit of the one and the other, that he may be able to represent them to himself without Trouble at the Hour of Death, which has always appear'd formidable to the greatest Saints, it will be morally impossible for him, without a very special Grace, to have them then.

It is true, that a Priest full of Zeal and Religion will endeavour to inspire him with them, by engaging him to pronounce after him Acts of Contrition for his Sins, of the Love of God, of Confidence in his Goodness, of Submission to his Orders, of Patience in the Pains he suffers, of Detachment from the Life he is going to lose: But how many dying People, who through the Neglect of accustoming themselves during Life to form in their Heart the

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Sentiments that they wish to have at the Hour of Death, have (like the Echo of *Psalm ciii.* which the Royal Prophet speaks) no other Share in the Words of the Priest but the Fidelity to repeat them. How advantageous then it is to a Christian to exercise, in time, his Mind and his Heart in those Sentiments of Religion, in order to prepare himself to die well.

But this first Preparation of interior Sentiments will naturally lead him to a second as necessary in time of Sicknes, with regard to the exterior Means which he ought to make use of to avoid the fatal Consequences of an unhappy Death. Most sick People seek, with great Eagerness, from the Skill of Physicians, the Remedies of which God has given them a Knowledge for the Comfort of the Body, uncertain what the Success may be. But a Christian who has accusom'd himself to look on Sicknes and Death in the Light which his Faith represents them, seeks still with more care in the Religion he professes, the wholesome Remedies

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Remedies which Jesus Christ has mercifully instituted for the certain Cure of his Soul, and which will likewise furnish him with powerful Weapons to sustain the last Conflicts that frighten the most Resolute at the Hour of Death.

Now it is in the Sacraments of Penance, of the Eucharist and Extreme-Union that Jesus Christ conveys to us these extraordinary and salutary Remedies.

As to the Use of the two first of these Sacraments, the Sick and Infirm ought often to confess their Sins and receive the Holy Communion, according to the Advice of their Director, when their Infirmary or Sicknes is of long Continuance. They will find, in reading the Chapters on Confession and Communion, the Sentiments proper to dispose them for obtaining and preserving the Graces conferr'd by these two Sacraments.

As to the Sacrament of Extreme-Union, in order to have the most proper Dispositions for receiving it, and not defer thinking of it to the last Extremity,

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tremity, we ought to prepare ourselves before-hand by frequently reading the Chapter that treats of this Sacrament, and fill our Minds with the Ideas, and our Hearts with the Expectation of the great Graces it bestows, in order to receive a more plentiful Infusion of them at the Hour of Death.

I add that a Christian, who ought, according to the Advice of the Holy Ghost, to think often of Death, is still more obliged to it when he is Infirm or Sick, that so he may the more easily submit to the Sentence which condemns all Men to it, and with the speedy Execution of which he is then threaten'd. It cannot therefore but be very salutary to a sick Person to read often the Chapter on the Acceptance of Death; for as much as he will find, in the reading of the six first Chapters of this Book, Sentiments that will engage him to practise the Virtues necessary for the State of Suffering wherein it pleases God to place him; he will also find, in the reading of this last, and the three following Chapters,

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ters, Motives that will induce him to renounce the present Life, to sigh after the next, to make a Sacrifice to God of all that is most dear to him in this World, to change Pain into Grace, and the most severe Chastisement of Sin into Merit, Reward, and a Crown of Glory.

The Sick ought often to have Recourse to the Protection of the Saints, and particularly of the Holy Virgin *Mary*, whom the Church calls the Health of the Infirm, and the Queen of all the Saints, in order to obtain, by their Prayers and Intercession, the Grace to undergo the Trials of Tribulation, which they sustain'd till Death; that they may one Day join with them in Heaven in publishing the Mercies of God, who has graciously vouchsafed to sanctify their Sufferings by the Merits of those of his Son our Saviour.

The Chapters and Articles of this Book will perhaps seem to some, of too great a length for the Sick and Infirm. But besides that such who are visited with long Illness, or habitual Infirmities,

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are well able to bear one half Hour's reading in a Day, they may divide them, and stop at different Places according to the Nature of their Sufferings.

What has been hitherto said of these Christian Sentiments was a sufficient Motive to induce me to translate them into our Language for the Benefit of my Countrymen. Besides, as the Salvation of Mankind was the End of the Incarnation, Sufferings and Death of Christ, of the Mission of the Apostles, and other Apostolical Men; and is still that of the Preaching, Exhortations, Homilies and other Writings of the Teachers of the Holy Catholick Church, I as one of her Members, tho' unworthy, thought it incumbent on me to contribute as far as the Slenderness of my Capacity would permit, in promoting so happy and glorious an End: And as the Subject of the following Sentiments is new and methodically handled, and the Truths contain'd in them so necessary, I pitch'd upon them as the most proper for my Purpose, and most useful for my Fellow-Subjects,

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Subjects, especially the Poor, and such as have not the Opportunity of being often visited in their Infirmities and Sickness by a Priest. If thro' Inadvertency any Error in Faith or Morals has crept into this Book I retract it beforehand, and entirely submit myself to the Judgment of my lawful Superiors, who represent, with regard to me, the Holy Catholick Apostolick and Roman Church: But if any Fault in the Impression, or otherwise, has escaped me, the Reader is pray'd to charitably correct it with his Pen, and if it please God to give a Blessing to this Edition it will be amended in the next. I have no more to say, but to earnestly beg my Reader, that in Acknowledgment of the Fruit he may reap by the reading of this Book, he will remember me in his Prayers, especially when he assists at the most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.



A D V I C E

[illegible]

ADVICE

TO THE

SICK.



ON the first Notice that is given to a sick Person of the Danger he is in, whether proceeding from the Symptoms of an immediate Death, or the Prognosticks which bode a Life of

Pain and lingering Infirmary; he ought instantaneously to lift up his Eyes towards Heaven, from whence are to be expected the Succours necessary for every Infirm or Sick Person. After having chosen a skilful Person to prescribe the Remedies proper for his Illness, because the Law of Nature prohibits to neglect them on such Occasions; he ought to propose to leave the Event of it to the Will of God, and to throw himself entirely into the Arms of his Providence. But in order to do this the more effectually, he ought immediately to put in order his Domestick Affairs, and dispose in time, by Will, whilst his Mind is free and capable of Application, of the temporal Goods which God
had

had confided to him for his Use during his Life; persuaded that this Disposition will be a Means to procure him that Tranquility of Mind so necessary to suffer and die like a Christian, and to detach him from all Affection to Creatures, the Separation from which is the more violent, and more terrible at the Hour of Death, as it is not then the time to begin to know the Vanity of them, and that the Chains which tie us to them do then more strongly captivate the Soul.

Let him therefore make his Will in the Presence of God and in so just a Manner, that it may be look'd upon by those who may have Interest in it, as both an Act of Justice and Religion.

An Act of Justice, that will supply the Deficiency of all the Obligations he may be under to make Restitution of ill-gotten Goods, in which he might have fail'd thro' Forgetfulness or otherwise during his Life; that will secure to his lawful Heirs what the Law orders him to leave them, to his Friends and those who had assisted him by their spiritual or corporal Services, Marks of his Affection and Acknowledgment, by leaving them Legacies as Gratitude requires in such Cases.

An Act of Religion, which, after having given up into the Hands of God the Possession of his Person and Life, out of Homage to his supreme Grandeur, will engage him to consider in the Person of the Poor, that of his aimable Saviour, whom the Excess of his Love for him has made to descend from
the

the Bosom of his Father, to sanctify him by his Grace during his Life, and to open the Gates of Heaven for him after his Death, by the Merits of that which he suffer'd on the Cross. That he may therefore become a Coheir of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, let him order that the Poor may be Coheirs of a Part of his Substance; prefer their Vows and Prayers for the Ease of his Soul to the Expences of a pompous Funeral, a thing so little conformable to the Spirit of Christianity.

After having put order to his temporal Affairs, and settled every thing that may trouble the Peace of his Soul, let him, for the future, have no other Occupation, but to turn his Eyes after the Example of *David*, towards the holy Mountains, from whence the Lord grants his Protection and Succour to all those that implore it in their Affliction.

Casting his Eyes afterwards on that other holy and visible Mountain, where, thro' the Mercy of God, he had the Happiness to be baptiz'd and educated; I mean the Holy Catholick Apostolical and Roman Church, in which alone Salvation is to be found, where Heaven grants to Men the Graces necessary for their Sanctification, and within whose Pale he ought to wish to die with the same Stedfastness that he had always lived in her. Let him beg of her then to open in his Favour the Treasure of Graces, of which she is the Depository, to administer often to him the Sacrament of Penance and the Eucharist during his Sicknes, should it be of long

long Continuance; otherwise the latter by way of Viaticum, and likewise the Extreme-Union whilst he is in his perfect Senses, that he may receive it with the Presence of Mind and Devotion becoming that Sacrament.

If it should please the Goodness of God to grant him his Senses to the last Moment of his Life, let him beg of his Confessor, or some discreet Person in his Absence, to remove all useless Persons from his Presence, who by their tumultuous Motions and Noise; or by the Tears which their Tenderness for him should make them shed, might trouble his Mind, and divert it from thinking continually of God; telling them, that he wants nothing more from their Charity but their Prayers, and that they will render him a double Service, if they please to offer them to God for him, at the Foot of the Altar if in the Day time, or in some private Place if in the Night; and so to procure him the Rest and Silence necessary to hear and relish the Christian Sentiments; in which he ought to be at presenting his Soul to the Lord.

But if on the contrary God should permit he should lose the Use of his Senses, the Assistants are desired to read the Prayers of the Church for such as are in their Agony, and to continue the good Offices of their Charity, until he renders his Soul into the Hands of God his Creator and Redeemer.

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CHRISTIAN



CHRISTIAN SENTIMENTS

PROPER

*For Sick and Infirm People, in order to
sanctify their Souls in their Illness,
and prepare themselves for a happy
Death, expressed in the Words of
Scripture and the Fathers.*

CH A P. I.

*Resignation of a CHRISTIAN in Sick-
ness to God's Appointment.*



ACCEPT, O my God, the
Infirmity, Sickness, Pains and
Death, which according to thy *Baruch. c.*
Will I must successively undergo *ii. 9.*
to render thy Sovereign Gran-
deur the Glory, Homage and Obedience I
owe it: I confess it is of Thee alone, who
art the immortal and eternal God, I hold
my Life and Being, and that it is by Sick- *Ecc. i. 8.*
ness

Iſa. xliii.

7.

ness and Death, I must acknowledge thy absolute Dominion over me; is it not just that I should respect thy Supreme Authority by my Submission in every State to which it pleaseth Thee to reduce me? Is it not just that I should pay due Homage to the Greatness of thy Being by the Annihilation of mine? Is it not just that by the Loss of my Life, I should honour the Immortality of thine, and that I should look upon myself as a Victim that is to be sacrificed to thy Glory?

John xi.

4.

Say, O my Jesus, of the Affliction I am in, what thou formerly saidst of the Affliction of the Man born Blind; and of that of so many Saints, Men and Women, whose Life was but Crosses, Pains and Afflictions, that thou hast not permitted and ordained it so, but to learn me to acknowledge and confess my Dependance upon Thee; Say, O Lord, of my Sickness and of the Death that is to finish it, what thou saidst of the Sickness and Death of *Lazarus*, that thou hast not permitted the one and the other but to manifest the Glory of God; and permit me to offer them to him, in union with thy Sufferings and Death. What a Motive of Consolation it is to me to follow the Lord, to find I am in the Order of his Providence; to enter into his Designs, to know that I am always under his Care, and in his paternal Hands, and that whatever

Ecc. ii. 3.

may happen to me, thro' him, will be salutary to me; and so to wait patiently for the Execution of what he shall ordain for me,

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3

me, and resign myself to his merciful Will tho' repugnant to Nature! What an Advantage it is to me to sacrifice my Life for the Honour and Service of my God! What a Happiness it is to me to give him a Proof of my Obedience by my Death, and thereby procure him the Glory due to his Holy Name! I accept it then with a Spirit of Homage and Obedience, and I am willing, O Lord, to begin this very Moment the Oblation of myself by my Submission to all the Sufferings it shall please thee to send me, *Mat. xi.* in Expectation of consummating it by my *26.* Death, which will properly constitute the Essence of it.

Oh! my God, is it not from thy adorable Hand that equally come both Good and *Ecc. xi.* Evil? Is it not Thou, who wisely dispensest *14.* the one and the other, and always with a View to sanctify and save us? What! after having received Life and Health from thee, is it not reasonable to receive Sickness and Death itself when it shall please thee to send it? Is it not Thou, who causest the heaviness of our Heart in the sorrowful Days of Affliction, as well as Joy in those of thy Favours and Gifts! Nothing then has ever happened to me of Good or Evil but what pleased thee, O Lord; and who am I, that *Jerem. ix.* I should oppose thy Designs, or that I should *Baruch. iv.* complain of thy Conduct towards me? Thou hast not permitted my Birth into this World but on Condition to depart it the Moment appointed by thy Providence; and the corruptible Matter, of which thou hast framed

Sap. xv. my Body, daily warns me by the Miseries it is pressed with, of its approaching Ruin and Destruction. I am intirely thine; thy

Ester. xiii. Power over me is absolute; if it please thee to deliver me from the Evils I am overwhelmed with, Thou canst do it; all things obey Thee in Heaven and on Earth; be then the Sovereign Disposer of my Lot. I subscribe to whatever it shall please thee to ordain for me, and resign myself in every thing to thy adorable Will; thrice happy for me to give thee Marks of my Attachment and Respects at the Price of what is dearest to me in this World. On my Bed while oppressed with Pain, I shall often say to myself: It is the Hand of God that strikes me, it is his Will I should suffer: Ought I not then to be perfectly submissive to his Orders, and to esteem myself content in the State wherein himself has placed me, seeing he is the fittest to make me know his Power and my own Nothing? Do not all the Members of my Body owe to their Creator the Homage of suffering for Him? Ought I not to think it an Honour to carry, by Sufferings, the Marks of those of my Saviour? Ought I to hesitate at becoming, by Sicknes and Death, a Victim to the Glory of a God, who for my Salvation has been a Victim on *Mount-Calvary*?

St. Aug.

But while I confess, O Lord, that by Sicknes and Death, I pay thy Sovereign Grandeur the Homage I owe it, I hope at the same time, to render thy Justice, by the one and the other, the Satisfaction due to it
for

for my Sins; and this is another Motive for me of intirely submitting to thy Orders however rigorous they may seem to be.

Yes, O Lord, I believe the Afflictions I am surrounded with are the just Penalty of my Disobedience; I believe Sicknefs and Death are the Consequence and Chastisement of Sin; I accept of and submit to them out of a thorough Conviction of my being a Sinner, not only originally, and by my Birth, *Rom. v.* but by Will, Deliberation and Malice. I *Eccl. iv.* acquiesce to the dreadful Sentence pronounced *3 Reg. ii.* against all Men; I am willing to walk in the way common to all Flesh; I consent that my Body should be oppressed with the Pains and Anguish of Death, surrounded with the Horrors of the Grave, and trodden under foot as a Worm of the Earth.

I confess, O Lord, that to reflect on this State according to Flesh and Blood is very shocking to Nature; but 'tis this very same sinful Nature so often revolting against thee, whose Ruin, Downfall and Destruction I consent to. For it is just, that he who deviates from good Order, by Disobedience, should be reduced by Chastisement; 'tis just, that he who strays from God by Pride, should return by the Humiliation of Infirmary; 'tis just, that the Bitters of Sicknefs should succeed the deceitful Sweets of Voluptuousness; 'tis just, that Punishment should follow Guilt; that the Pleasure proceeding from Sin should be punished with Pain; and that the ill Use of Life should end in Death.

St. Greg.

St. Thom.

Aq. i.

Part. q.

xix.

Art. vi.

St. Aug.

St. Fulgen. This is, O Lord, the most necessary and most suitable Penance for a Sinner as I am; and as I believe it is what thy Justice appoints and chuses for me, I embrace it with Submission, for the Expiation of my Faults.

St. Bern. Can I, O Lord, make thee a greater Satisfaction than this? Wouldst thou judge me according to Rigor? Wouldst thou pronounce a severer Judgment against me, than that of reducing me to the low and painful Condition I am in? Wouldst thou consume

Job xiii. and destroy me for the Sins of my Youth? Remember, O my God, thou hast told me

Eze. chap. xviii. by a Prophet, that thou hast not Pleasure in the loss of a Sinner; that when thy Justice strikes him, it is not to destroy, but to humble and wound him in such a Manner, as

he may be sensible of his Humiliation and Wounds. I give thee Thanks then for having humbled my Pride by the several Evils that encompass me; I confess it is thro'

an Effect of thy Love for sinful Man, that without wronging thy Justice, thou wouldst that Sickness and Death which in the Law

St. Aug. Lib. iv. § Civit. of Nature, were the Penalty and Chastisement of Sin, should in the Law of Grace become a Remedy and a Sacrifice for Sin itself. Excluded by my Crimes from the celestial Inheritance, what Goodness is it of

a God to recall me to it by the salutary Discipline He uses towards me? Rebellious to the Commands of a Father as good as he is

Idem. in Ps. lxxix. just, ought I not to fear rather to be disinherited from his Family, than chastised by

Isa. liii. his

his Hand? When I behold his only Son so severely dealt with, tho' exempt from Sin, can I who am Guilty refuse Punishment, or even murmur at it? When I behold my Pride humbled by the proper Humiliation of a God, ought I not to esteem myself happy, to be humbled after his Example? When I behold the Son of God cloath himself with my Miseries, espouse my Weaknesses, take upon himself, out of Love for me, the Punishment due to my Sins, deliver himself up to the Dolors and Death of the Cross, in order to obtain my Reconciliation with his Father, and restore me to the Right of his Inheritance, ought I not to accept all manner of Evils, and unite them to his, so to render them salutary to me?

O my Jesus, how happy am I to have been born under the Law of Grace and Love! 'Tis Thou who hast been destined, chosen and proposed by the Father, to obtain our Peace with him by the Effusion of thy Blood, and by the Price of thy Death: By obeying him even so far as to die upon the Cross, thou hast finished the Work of my Salvation; and thou hast promised me Heaven, if in Imitation of thy Obedience, I accept of and suffer patiently the Pains of Sickness. What other Acknowledgment can I make Thee of this double Favour, O my Jesus, but to heartily embrace, after thy Example, all the Evils that come from thy Hand?

Rom. iii.

Heb. v.

Ps. cxv.

All Mankind before thy Birth, O my Saviour, were condemned to the same Evils

Eccl. ii.

that environ me, and to the same Pains. *Gen. xlvii.* suffer; their Life, tho' short, was but a Chain of Miseries: A heavy Yoke of Pain, *Eccl. xl. 1.* and Afflictions was laid on sinful Man; the Law punished him with Rigor and without Mercy, it was ordained for him to suffer, but without Jesus he had no Merit of his Sufferings: He must have had a High Priest, *Heb. vii.* who, without partaking of his Crimes, partook of his Punishment and Pains; he must have had a Deliverer, who assuming only the form of a Sinner, took upon himself the Curse laid upon Sinners; he must have had a God humbled to our Flesh, who made of his Blood shed upon the Cross, the Remedy to heal the mortal Wounds of Sin; he must have had a Man-God, who to restore him to the Immortality he had lost, subjected himself to the Sentence of Death, that Man had incurred by his Rebellion: And 'tis Thou, O Word Incarnate, who hast taken upon thyself this Malediction, in order to restore us to the Benediction of thy Father; *St. Cyr.* 'tis Thou, O holy and spotless Victim, who hast been the expiatory Sacrifice for all our Sins; 'tis Thou, just by way of Excellence, who hast immolated thy self for our Salvation; 'tis Thou, O charitable Physician, who hast received Death in our Nature, to procure us Life in Thine; 'tis Thou, who wouldst undergo all manner of Tryals and Afflictions, to compassionate ours and render them meritorious of a happy Eternity. *Heb. ix.* Oh! my Saviour, 'tis then thro' a Motive of Justice and Love that I am willing to

to suffer and die for Thee; my Life belongs, to Thee by right of Purchase; the Price *1 Pet. i.* thou hast given for it, in sacrificing thine, exceeds infinitely all that I can offer Thee; thy Love presses upon me, O my Jesus, and requires of me what in Justice I can't refuse thee.

Command me then to come to thee, and to follow thee in the way of Sufferings and Pain, that have formed thy Title of Saviour of our Souls, and merited for us that Glory to which they have raised thee; I consent to walk all the Days of my Life, in this way of Sufferings, in order to enter into the Designs of Mercy and Salvation thou hast upon me; I am willing to follow thee in that painful Path thou hast traced out for me by thy Words and Example. *Matth. xiv.*

But, O my Jesus, I stand in need of the powerful Succour of thy Grace to execute a Resolution so much against my feeble, languishing, and at the same time slothful and sensual Nature: Come then to the Assistance of my Weakness, infuse into my Heart this Resignation so just and reasonable in it self, and so salutary to me; and in shewing me thy Father's Kingdom, which thy holy Humanity has likewise made ours, let me partake of that perfect Submission to his Orders, be they ever so painful, which thou hadst to them, even so far as to deliver thy self up to the Pains and Death of the Cross: Make me a faithful Imitator of thy Obedience to his adorable Will; grant that I may look upon and receive as a Favour *John vi.*

B 5

the

the Occasions and Moments which thou hast given me to suffer; that I may preserve as a precious Depositum the Union thou hast made within me of the Gift of Sufferings, with that of the Faith thou hast given me;

Phil. i. 29. that I may be as fully disposed to suffer for the Truths of my Religion, as I am to believe them; that I may never forget the Obligation thou hast laid on me, to follow thee by carrying my Cross; that I may look upon the Infirmities thou hast visited me with, as so many Features wherein thou wilt have me to bear a Resemblance with thy self; that I may receive them as so many Means which thou hast given me to sanctify and save myself, and that I may imbrace them with that Spirit of Faith and Submission, which, according to a Prophet and thy Apostle, produces Christian Patience.

*Aug. in
Ps. lxliii.*

*Rom. v.
chap. 8.*

C H A P. II.

*Patience necessary for a CHRISTIAN
in the State of Sickness.*

YES, O my God, I know that from Faith in Jesus Christ, and the Power of his Grace proceeds that Patience so necessary for me in the painful Condition to which I am reduced; but I likewise know that Patience, amidst the Afflictions of this Life, depends on my Submission to the Will of God who sends them; and that it is by
this

Heb. x.

Ps. lxi.

CHRISTIAN SENTIMENTS, &c.

this Submission, I shall obtain that Peace and Tranquility, which is the Price and Merit of Sufferings.

Yes, O my God, I acknowledge and confess, and it is but too true, that it was the want of Submission and Obedience to thy *Rom. v.* Orders, that it was the Desire of Independency that plunged the first Man and his Posterity into this Deluge of Miseries and Afflictions, with which it is overwhelmed. And I acknowledge in the Sight of Heaven and Earth, and that with Grief and Confusion, *Gen. xlii.* that my Sickness is the Consequence and Punishment of my Disobedience. How often, O my God, have I despised thy Commandments and transgressed thy holy Law? In what Age of my Life have I not offended thee? When have I enjoyed Reason and Liberty, without making them subservient to Falshood and Iniquity? How long have I walked, and even wearied myself in the *Sap. v. 7.* ways of Injustice and Perdition? Ah! like a *Psf. cxviii.* lost Sheep I have a thousand and a thousand times strayed from the Paths of Salvation, wherein I had promised to walk incessantly.

And yet, O Lord, how silent hast thou remained, while I committed Sin in thy Presence, and before thine Eyes? With what Forbearance full of Meekness and Charity hast thou behaved, longing for my Return to thee? With what Patience hast thou *2 Pet. iii.* been witness to my Disorders? How often, *Sap. xi.* like a charitable Shepherd, hast thou tried the Means to bring me back? With what excess of Toleration and Goodness hast thou bore

Isa. 1.

bore with my Disobedience, in Expectation of my Conversion? By how many secret Inspirations hast thou endeavour'd to recall me to thee? How many inward Sollicitations have I felt, from thy holy Spirit? How often hast thou reprimanded and threaten'd me by the Mouth of thy Ministers? Thy Heart was moved with Wrath to see me so ungrateful to so many Favours, and so rebellious to so many Graces; thy Patience was changing into Fury, the Severity of thy Justice that did Violence to thy usual Goodness, and prompted it to take the hard Resolution of punishing me, had already pronounced the Sentence of my Condemnation; but thy Love and merciful Tenderness for me stopt the Execution of it; thou couldst not find in thy Heart to destroy me, because thou art my God and my Father.

Osee. xi.

Ezek. xviii.

May thy Patience, so full of Mercy towards me, be then this Day, O Lord, the Motive of that which thou commandest me to have; and may the long Silence thou hast kept, while I deserved by my Crimes to hear the terrible Sentence of thy Eternal Vengeance, engage me patiently to bear these light and transitory Evils, with which thy Justice vouchsafes to be satisfied.

O Grace of my Jesus, it is by thy Succour I am enabled to remain in Peace and Silence amidst the Pains I suffer; it is by thy Succour I can preserve Patience in the painful Condition to which I am reduced; grant it me, I beseech thee, O Lord, thro' the Merits of that Meekness and Patience thou

thou hast shewn in the midst of the Dolors *Isa. liii.*
 of thy bitter and opprobrious Passion. Then
 become the voluntary Victim of Propitiation
 for my Sins, what Stripes from the rigorous
 Justice of a God hast thou not received?
 And in receiving them what Patience has
 been greater than thine? Thou hast not so *1 Pet. ii.*
 much as opened thy Mouth to complain of
 the Injuries, Raileries and violent Pains they
 made thee suffer; thou wast dumb like
 a Sheep led to the Slaughter; thou deli-
 veredst thyself up without Resistance to him
 who unjustly condemned thee; and the De-
 sire thou hadst, for my Salvation, made thee
 to remain content upon the Cross when it
 was in thy Power to have descended from it,

Tertul.

Ah! my Soul, behold thy Model; behold
 him who in the Dolors of his Passion, per-
 sonally shews thee how thou oughtst to be- *Aug. in*
 have in those of thy Sickness: Christian *Pf.*
 Patience is an Effect and an Imitation of that
 of thy Saviour; thou reposest all thy Hopes
 in the Religion that thou dost profess, and
 glory to behold Jesus Christ as thy Master
 and thy Pattern; thou desirest to have Share
 in the Reward of his Labours, but wherein
 dost thou imitate him in his Patience, amidst
 the little Pains thou sufferest? Alas! He
 alone was truly called the Man of Sorrows, *Isa. liii.*
 the Man of whom it is said, that there has
 been no Sorrow like unto his; he has passed
 thro' the most severe Tryals, he was filled
 with Scorns, besmeared with Spittle, con-
 demned to a cruel and infamous Death,
 ranked and executed with Profligates; he
 was.

Tbren. iii.

was struck of God in his Wrath, and sustained the whole Weight of his Malediction upon the Cross: And yet with what Patience did he bear, Just and Innocent as he was, the Punishment that should have fallen on thee alone? Meek, during his Life, he would be mute in the violent Pains of his Passion and Death, in order to merit for and inspire thee with Meekness, Peace and Patience, in thine.

*St. Chrys.
Hom. xlviii.
in Gen.*

O my Soul, what Fruits hast thou then hitherto reaped from the Examples of this Divine Saviour? What Fidelity in following his Steps has yet appear'd in thee? What Patience hast thou as yet shewn in the Course of this painful Carreer that is open to thee; painful, I say, to Nature, but precious and amiable to Faith, and in which Jesus Christ has been pleased to walk, in order to animate thee with Patience? What Strength, what Support hast thou received from the Examples of this Divine Master? Who would not feed and fatten himself (as *Tertullian* expresses it) with the Pleasure of Patience in his Passion, but to encourage thee to the Practice of this Virtue in thy Sickness?

*Lib. de
Pat. c. iii.*

Ah! what a subject of Confusion it is, to see thee so faint-hearted, sour and impatient in thy Illness? Ought thou not to fear lest Jesus Christ, who came upon the Earth to save thee by the Merits of thy Sufferings united to his, should pronounce the Sentence of thy Condemnation and Perdition, for having so little benefitted by his Grace and Example?

St. Chrys.

Wouldst

CHRISTIAN SENTIMENTS, &c.

35

Wouldst thou excuse thy Weakness, Cowardice and Impatience, by saying, thou hast not in thy Pains, that Strength and all powerful Succour, which Jesus Christ received in his from the Divinity, to which his Humanity was Hypostatically united? But dost thou not know, that this Saviour, who took upon himself the Pains due to our Sins, had likewise espoused all the Weaknesses incident to our Nature, and consequently, that he would feel even to excess the Violence of Pains, with which no mortal Man was ever pierced like him.

Heb. ii. & iv.

St. Aug. in Ps. cii.

Besides, in order to render thy Tenderness and Faintheartedness inexcusable, cast thy Eyes on all the Saints who were weak and passible like thee: And after reckoning up many Millions of Martyrs, who have borne with Patience the most terrible Punishments, and remain'd steadfast and silent in the midst of the most cruel Torments, oughtst thou not to reproach thyself with Effeminacy and Impatience in thy little Sufferings, and in a salutary Confusion say to thyself: Ah! if the Church in her first Centuries, and other times of Persecution, had no other Christians but such as I, 'tis credible she would have had no Martyrs, since the Condition of their Engagement to Christianity was to look upon themselves as Men condemn'd to die, and always ready to lay down their Lives amidst the most frightful and cruel Torments. What Goodness is it of a God not to have given me Birth, in those times

James v.

Heb. xi.

St. Cypr. Epist. xlii.

Tert.

of

of Tryal and Persecution, which required so much Firmness and Patience?

St. Bern. Represent likewise to thy self so many Confessors and Virgins, whom the Fire of Divine Love has consumed like Victims by the Rigors of Penance; whose Infirmities, much greater than thine, have held twenty, thirty, and forty Years: The Life of many of them was but a Series of Sufferings and Ailments; we see others of them, whose Body was but a Scene of violent Pains that succeeded one to another, and yet they have all shewn a Greatness of Soul and heroick Patience in these different and severe Tryals; Thrice happy for us, said they, to follow our Saviour and to suffer Afflictions that are to procure us the Coming and Possession of this Divine Master.

Nim. xxxii. What, my Soul, Thou wouldst have Share in the Inheritance of his Saints, and thou refuseth to acquire it by Patience amidst the Afflictions of this Life! What, thou desirest to partake of their Crown, without partaking of their Labours! Thou challengest the Laurel before gaining the Battle and Victory! But, pray, would God be just in giving thee for nothing, what hast cost so Dear to Jesus Christ and all the Saints; to thee especially, whose Sufferings perhaps are only the Consequence of a Dissolution in thy Manners?

Tert.

Ah, my J-esus! How remote am I from thy Father's Kingdom, of which thou makest none to partake after Death but those who

suffer

suffer, in Peace and with Courage, the Evils wherewith thou triest thine Elect during Life. Pardon my Effeminacy and Tenderness; pardon my Impatience and Murmurings; I have taken my Resolution, O my Saviour; conscious that having sought for some Ease in my Illness, thou dost not permit I should find any, because thou thinkest it good for my Salvation; and since nothing remains for me in the Violence of my Pains, but to turn my Heart and Affections towards thee, that I may be able to suffer them in Silence; my Eyes shall therefore be incessantly fixed on thee, who art the perfect Model of that Patience, St. James exhorts me to in my Sufferings. For after that Apostle had proposed to me the Example of Job's Patience, he presently desires me to consider thine, which ended only with thy Life upon the Cross; giving me to understand that if Job's Patience has been partly recompensed in this World by a temporal Prosperity, as he belonged to the ancient Covenant; thine having received no Reward but after Death, I ought as thy Disciple, and Heir of thy Kingdom, that is not of this World, to sacrifice my self after thy Example without Reserve, and without expecting any Consolations upon Earth.

Once more, O my Jesus, I shall never cease to have my Eyes upon Thee in my Sufferings; I shall often ruminate on the numberless Contradictions, Insults and Outrages thou hast received in the whole Course of thy Life from Men, whom thou so tenderly

St. Amb.

James v.

De Imit.

C. L. ii. c.

xii.

Cypri.

derly lovedst; but in the midst of all which, thou hast ever shewn a great deal of Meekness and Patience, to teach me how I ought to behave in the Afflictions of this Life

Tertul.

2 Cor. vi.

St. Aug.

St. Amb.

Thy Cross shall always be present to me, to hearten me in my Pains, and to make me bear them with that Courage and Patience thou hadst had in thine. It is just, O my Saviour, that while I glory in being thy Disciple, and look upon thee as my Master, I should pay thee the Tribute of that Patience thou hast exercised for my Salvation. It is just I should offer unto thee, in Silence, the Sacrifice of my Pains, whether of Mind, or Body, and from what Cause soever they proceed, since thou hast suffered much greater for my Sake. It is just, that my Patience should be durable and persevering, in order to have some Conformity with thine; that is to say, I ought, after thy Example, to make it appear on all Occurrences to the End of my Life; because thou condemnest that sort of Patience which shews it self on some Occasions, and is lost on others.

But, O my Jesus, this Patience which can make me thy Follower in this Life, in order to reign with thee in the next, is a Good that belongs to thee, and a Gift which thou canst bestow on me: And not finding *that I am capable* of practising any Virtue of myself, how can I repress, without thy Succour, the Revolts of a Nature *averse* to Sufferings: Thou art the Source of this Strength, and this Patience thou requirest of me.

Come

Come then, I beseech thee to the Assistance of my Soul so often agitated by the Motions of Impatience: Make it, by thy Grace, less mindful of the Sufferings of this Body, which it loves too much, and less sensible of the different Pains with which thou triest it, and which make it to revolt on the slightest Occasions; shew it the inestimable Good which Patience procures; tell it, that the Cross of Infirmities becomes light to a Christian who bears it in Peace, and on the contrary, that it is heavier to, and overwhelms (tho' to no Purpose for Salvation) such as bear it with Regret; put a stop to the Complaints of this Flesh which deserves the severest Punishments; let it know, that what it suffers, comes from thy salutary Hand, and therefore, that far from murmuring or complaining, it ought to remain in a deep and respectful Silence. Enlighten my Faith for that Purpose, O my Jesus, awake my Faith, to the End that at the Remembrance of thy Sufferings, and those of all thy Saints, I may make my self easy in mine; to the End that the extreme Patience thou hast shew'd towards me, while I offended thee, may make the Support and Merit of mine; that the Thoughts of that thundering *Anathema*, pronounced against those who give themselves up to Murmuring and Impatience in their Sufferings, may engage me to bear mine in Silence; that the Thoughts of thy Coming which is at Hand, of thy Looks watchful over me, and of the eternal Happiness depending on the Sufferings.

*Cypri.**Aug. de bono Patrien. c. ii.**Matth. ix.**1 Tim. i.**Eccl. ii.*

James v. ings of this Life, may make me to bear them in Peace, with Patience, and even with Love.

C H A P. III.

The Love of SUFFERINGS, a Source of Consolation for a Sick CHRISTIAN.

YES, O my God, I cannot reflect on the ardent Love Jesus and all the Saints have shewn for the Sufferings of this Life; I cannot consider the inestimable Good proceeding from it, without begging the Grace to love those of this Sickness thou sendest me: Grant me, I beseech thee, this Grace, I beg it thro' the Merits of our Saviour, and thro' the Intercession of the great Apostle firm and constant Lover of Sufferings: This faithful Disciple of Jesus crucified, placed his whole Joy in the Tribulations he always had to suffer; he made it his whole Application and Study to know only Jesus Christ expiring upon the Cross for our Salvation; and such ought to be my principal Study, and the predominant Love of my Heart, in quality of a Christian.

2 Cor. xii. Yes, O my Jesus, obliged by my Baptism to a penitential and laborious Life, I ought to continually set before my Eyes the Example thou hast given me in thy Person; I ought often to behold thy Cross as the Mystery by way of Excellence of thy Love for Sufferings; to meditate on that Zeal and Constancy

1 Cor. ii.

1 Pet. ii.

CHRISTIAN SENTIMENTS, &c.

21

Constancy of thine in bearing all the Ignominies of it. To consider with what Earnestness and Fervency thou ascendedst that Instrument of my Salvation, there to make Satisfaction for the Outrage done to God by my Crimes, and obtain Pardon for me; to admire that holy Impatience to see the Day of thy Sacrifice come, and inward Joy thou felt'st the Moment thou finishedst it on the Cross. What Charity, O my Saviour, has ever been more ardent than that which consumed thee in the Sight of the Divine Majesty, and made thee a Holocaust all burning with the Flames of Love, in order to procure us that of thy Father?

Luke xxii.

St. Aug.

Behold, O my Soul, the great Object of our Religion which thou oughtst to regard and follow all the Days of thy Life, Jesus immolated to his Father from his coming into the World, to be a Victim of Propitiation in Favour of thee; Jesus continuing his Sacrifice by the Labours of the most dolorous Penance; Jesus consummating on the Cross his Sacrifice by the Effusion of his Blood, and a cruel Death; let us add, O my Soul, Jesus, whom an ingenious Charity in favour of thee, engages to renew every Day on our Altars the great Sacrifice of thy Salvation, by the mystical Offering of himself.

Heb. x.

St. Chrys.

O my Saviour, couldst thou ingage me by more pressing and tender Motives than these to take up my Cross, and follow thee? Coming to bring the Divine Fire on Earth, what didst thou desire, but that it

Luke xii.

*Acts xiv.**2 Cor. iv.**St. Bern.*

it shou'd be kindled in my Heart? Coming down from Heaven, and not ascending thither again but by Dolors and Sufferings, hast thou not given me to understand that I shall not ascend after thee, but thro' a deal of Pains and Tribulations? Making me a voluntary Victim by my Baptism, hast thou not engaged me to Sacrifice myself, after thy Example, by a continual Mortification of my Body and Senses? Dying upon a Cross for Love of me, hast thou not commanded me to daily die by Penance, in order to give Marks of my Love for thee? What Infidelity, O my Jesus, has ever then been greater than mine? What Marks of Conformity and Resemblance with thee has hitherto appear'd in me? On thy Side, what Love for Sufferings? On mine, what Ardour for the Pleasures and Ease of Life? Pardon me, O my Jesus, for having so little benefited by thy Lessons and Examples, for having so long deferr'd to walk in thy Steps, for having behaved so different from thee, for having loved the Delights of an easy Situation under a Head crown'd with Thorns: Pardon me for having served and sacrificed to the Enemy of God and my Salvation, by minding nothing but the Ease of the Body, and Pleasures of the World, which draw the Heart into Remissness and Effeminacy.

Penetrated by thy Grace with a sincere Sorrow for Ingratitude, I implore thy Clemency, O my Jesus, I fly to the Virtue of thy precious Blood, the only Remedy for the Wounds of my Soul. I embrace with a good

good Heart the Cross of Infirmities that have been the Occasion of my Conversion, and Attachment to thee: I consent to be immolated and destroy'd as a Burnt-offering, by the Pains of Sicknefs and Death, to make up the Deficiency of my whole Life in doing Penance; thrice happy for me to have it in my Power to avoid, by suffering transitory Pains, the eternal Miseries I deserved to be overwhelmed with. *St. Bern.*

Yes, O my God, this Reflection alone shou'd suffice to make me love all the Evils that come from thy Hand; yes, when I think of that cruel Dominion of Sin that had kept me in Subjection, of that terrible Yoke of my Passions under which I had been oppress'd, of those Iron Chains of my vicious Habits, with which I had been so fast bound, of that Mortal Gulf wherein I had so deep plunged myself; when after that I consider how thy all-gratuitous Mercy has deliver'd me from that wretched Slavery, that it has made me shake of that fatal Yoke of Satan, that it has reinstated me in the Liberty of the Children of God, and in the Right of his Inheritance; what Pains, what Labours ought I not chearfully to undergo, in order to thank a God who sayed me by his Sufferings, and deliver'd me from the eternal Death I deserv'd at the Expençe of his own Life. *St. Greg. Magn. d. 30. Mor. l. 17. St. Aug. Lib. x. Conf. I Pet. iii.*

I had promised Thee, O my Jesus, to continually punish myself by the Rigors of Christian Mortification, to make a perpetual Divorce with my Senses which have
so

Deut. xxiii.

- so often seduced me, and pass the rest of my Days in the Practice of Penance: Yet what Slackness, what Delays in performing my Promise? What Opposition and Repugnance to revenge on myself the Injuries done thy Divine Majesty by my Crimes? How great then was thy Mercy towards me, O my God, to have had Pity on my Weakness, and Self-love: Seeing me too fainthearted to imbrace Penance, which is the only Resource for a Sinner, and the only Plank that remains to him after Shipwreck, Thou hast thy self laid on me by Sickness this Yoke so heavy and painful to Nature; seeing me too sensual and unmortified to punish by Austerities this Flesh so often disobedient to thy Orders, Thou hast taken Care to be revenged of it by the Infirmities with which thy Justice has so long afflicted it. Join then, O Lord, the Union of thy Grace to the Bitterness and Rigour of thy Discipline, to the End that this mystical Death, this Destruction of myself may become amiable to me; give my Heart that Love for Sufferings thou requirest of it. Thou alone canst grant me this Gift: It is true I don't deserve it, but my Jesus has deserved it for me. And seeing Thou makest me to partake of his Dolors and Cross, give me some Share of the Love he had for them.
- St. Chrys.*
- St. Aug.*
- Job xxxiii.*
- St. Aug.*
- Idem.*

Idem. O my Soul, oughtst thou to hesitate a Moment to look on the Love of Sufferings, and accept of it from the liberal Hand of God as one of the most excellent and salutary

tary of Gifts? In asking him a thousand and a thousand times the coming and Possession of his Kingdom, hast thou not at the same time asked the Execution of his Will on thee? Seeing then his Will is to sanctify and save thee, oughtst thou not to love the Means he gives thee to effectuate it? And since he retains the Affections of the most tender Father, in visiting thee with Sickness, oughtst thou not to receive it with the Sentiments of a Son affectionate to his Orders. *1 Theff. iv.*
Heb. xii.

I thank thee then, O my God, that thou hast had Pity on me, not in sparing, but in curing me of my mortal Wounds by Afflictions and Infirmities; may they for ever be sweet and amiable to me, seeing they have been so profitable and salutary to me. *St. Aug.*

How charming and agreeable, O Lord, are thy Tabernacles, and how precious are the Dolours and Death that are to bring me thither! One only Day in thy House is better than a thousand Years in earthly Delights; what is it therefore to procure one's self the eternal Possession of it for some Days of Pains and Sufferings. *St. Bern.*

Grant, O Lord, that I may always prize the Evils of this Life, according to the Value and Excellence of the celestial Good, which succeeds them after Death; grant I may never forget the Obligation a Christian is under to partake of the Sufferings of our Saviour, before partaking of his Glory; that I may always remember, amidst the Pains of Sickness, that Sentence pronounced in Heaven, and which is at were the funda-
C mental

mental Law of that Kingdom: That being made the Children of God by Baptism, we become his Heirs, and Coheirs with Jesus Christ his Son, provided always we indure after his Example, and in Union with his Sufferings, the Evils which God in his Justice has annex'd to this mortal Life. Now, my Soul, canst thou suffer as a Child of God, and Coheir with Jesus Christ, without Suffering according to his Spirit? Canst thou have a perfect Union with Jesus Christ, either in his Sufferings or in his Glory without Love and Charity? Dost thou not know that Love constitutes the proper Character of the Children of God and Disciples of Christ; that it is from Love should proceed, as from a living Root, thy Submission, Patience, Joy, and Courage in the Evils thou sufferest, in order to be agreeable to God, and worthy of his Rewards.

Rom. viii.

St. Aug.

St. Bern.

O my God, give me then thy Love so necessary for me, without which I should suffer without Merit; behold my Jesus, whom Love has render'd immoveable on the Cross: After having given me thy only Son, and deliver'd him over for my Salvation, couldst thou refuse me his Love, which is the Fruit of his Labours, Sufferings and Death.

St. Chrys.

Thou knowest, O Lord, that this Love will be a Support to me in the painful and afflicting Condition to which I am reduced; in granting it me, thou wilt give me not only the Courage to accept all Evils as necessary Remedies, but also that of triumphing over

over

over them, by making me overcome the Weakness of Nature.

This Christian Courage, which the Divine Love produces in a Heart truly faithful, despises the Evils that Men mostly fear; it does not mind what it suffers, but for whom it suffers, and what it gains by Suffering; *St. Pet.* it does not matter if the way it goes, be *Chrys.* rugged and difficult, provided it comes to *Ser. xxii.* God, who is its last End, and the most tender Object of its Desires. A Christian does not look upon Sufferings as a Scourge from God, but as a Means that his Mercy uses to make his Grace reign in him; a Disciple of Christ looks upon and receives Afflictions as an Exercise of Virtue that prepares a Crown in Heaven for him, and a Seed which contains a Harvest of Glory for Eternity: *St. Aug.* A true Coheir with Jesus Christ fears but little the Pains of Life, or Death that is to put an End to them; but on the contrary he desires Love, and feeds on them, Death being to him an early Resurrection, and the *St. Cypr.* Essence of the Sacrifice he is willing to make of himself to God; like another *Theresa* he only desires to let him suffer or die; he begs of him that Sufferings or Death may for the future be the Object of his Love.

These are, O my Soul, the Fruits of that Love with which it is of great Importance to be penetrated, and which a sick Person ought to continually ask of God, that he may not lose the Merit of Sufferings, render the Means of Salvation which the Good-

ness of God presents to him unprofitable, or fail of attaining Heaven to which this Love is a sure way.

St. Aug. Ah, my Soul is there any Infirmity, Sick-
 Traſt. xii. ness, or Pain, which thou oughtst not to
 in Joan. suffer in Peace, and with a good Heart? Wherefore then dost thou oppose by thy Impatience in thy Evils, and thy Earnestness to be freed from them, the Designs of Mercy God has upon thee. What, turn to Poison that which his Goodness presents thee as a Remedy! Use to thy Destruction, Evils that God sends thee to work thy Salvation! Procure to thy self eternal Death by the Wounds of the Body, which the heavenly Physician makes use of to cure those of the Soul! What, to receive by the Sufferings of this Life, sure Proofs of the Love of thy God, and not to acknowledge it by an amorous Acceptation of the Pains with which he favours thee! What, not to love the charitable Hand of thy Saviour, who wills to cleanse thy Wounds by Sickness, when he himself has undergone the greatest Pains and Afflictions in order to operate thy Cure?

St. Greg. What!
 M.

St. Aug.

What! To have so much Love for, and so great a tie to a transitory Life, that slips away in spight of us! What, wholly attentive to whatever can prolong it, strangely alarm'd and frighten'd when an Addition of Sufferings or a new Accident threatens to deprive us of it; whilst Jesus Christ has shewn so much Ardour and Desire for the Torments that were to shorten his!

Ah,

Ah, my Jesus, thy Example confounds me, thy Grace solicits me to make a better Use of the Means of Sanctification, which thou offerest me, and thy Love for Sufferings engages and presses me to imbrace those you are pleased to send me, not only with a good Heart, but with the Joy which this Love inspires.

C H A P. IV.

Joy of a CHRISTIAN in Sickness the Fruit of his Love for SUFFERINGS.

YES, O my Soul, such is the Virtue of the Christian Religion, such is the Character of the New-Law, such is the Strength of the Grace of our Saviour, such is the Efficacy of the Divine Love, as to inspire Joy amidst Pains, Dolors and Sufferings. 'Tis not enough for a Christian Soul to be patient in the Evils of this Life, she likewise ought to fix her Joy and Glory in them. Since the Son of God has reconciled us to his Father by the Effusion of his Blood; since he has prepared for us by his Sufferings the salutary Remedy for ours; since by his Death he has procured us Life and opened Heaven for us, no Evils whatsoever have any thing of sad or grievous in them to the true Christian or faithful Disciple of an humbled God, crown'd with Thorns and dead upon a Cross. We rejoice in the Pains and Sufferings which happen to us,

St. Bern.

*St. Aug.
de verb.
Apost.*

Rom. v.

said

said the first Disciples of this Divine Master, the Scorns and Outrages we are made to suffer, the Loss of our Goods, Liberty and Life, far from being afflicting, are matter of Joy to us: Our Happiness and Comfort is to give a Proof, in the midst of Torments and the most violent Sufferings, of the Sincerity of our Love for God, and of the Holiness of his Religion.

Paulin.

Epist. iii.

Ah! my Soul, hast thou any other Master to imitate and follow, but these Founders and first Professors of Christianity? An infinite number of Martyrs of all Ages and Sexes have, after their Example, declared to their Persecutors, they never enjoy'd more agreeable Moments than those which they pass'd in the midst of Torments; many beheld the Instruments of their Punishment with the greatest Alacrity, they ran to it with a holy Ardour, imbraced it with Sentiments of inexpressible Joy, and earnestly pray'd the Lord, that their Sufferings should not end but with their Life. O my Soul, ought not that wonderful Joy which all have shewn amidst the greatest Evils (the very reading of which makes the most intrepid to tremble) ought it not, I say, to excite thine, in the little Pains thou sufferest, seeing thy Trials are very far from being equal to theirs. O what Pain! O what Sweetness. rather, said these Souls, penetrated with the Love of Jesus, who had saved them by his Sufferings! What Joy, what Pleasure and Consolation dost thou pour on those Evils which were so full of Gall and Bitterness

*SS. Mar-
cel.*

St. Bern.

for

for thee! Thy Rigors are inexpressibly charming to us; excite then our Desires to suffer more for thee, to the end we may the longer taste the Pleasure of it. Such is the Language of true Love: one suffers with Joy *1 Cor. xiii.* for the Object he loves.

How weak then, O my Soul, how languishing and remiss is thy Love for God, since thou givest way to Grief and Sadness, at the Sight of thy Evils, that are not the Shadow of those which the Saints look'd upon as their greatest Delight! Comparing thy Conduct to theirs, be ashamed of thy Effeminacy and Sensuality, and chiefly take care that thy Love for God be no more than a Shadow of theirs. *Greg. M.*

The Remembrance of that Joy which their Divine Master had proposed to himself in the Dolors of his Passion, excited them to Alacrity in their Sufferings, they rejoiced to become a Sacrifice to a God, who had been a Victim for them on *Mount Calvary*; they expected with Pleasure the Moment they were to be disengaged from the Links of the Body, in order to be vested with the Glory of their Saviour, with whom they had already been united in Mind and Affection; they triumph'd with Alacrity in the Hands of Tyrants, they pray'd them to break by Tortures the Veil of their Flesh which retarded them from the clear Sight of God: The Desire of possessing him, mortified in them all Sentiment of Pain: Incessantly remembering that they had renounced the World in Baptism, they rejoiced that Death *Heb. xii.*
Ibid. c. x.
should.

*St. Greg.
Naz.
Orat. ix.
& xvi.*

should deliver them from it: Convinced that the heavenly Father own'd as Heirs to his Kingdom, those who carry by Afflictions the Badge of his Son, they reckon'd the Occasions to suffer as the most happy Events of their Life, and look'd upon the Instruments of their Punishment as the finest Ornaments of the triumph they hoped for in Heaven.

*St. Bern.
Serm. de
St. And.*

Canst thou, O my Soul, have stronger Motives of rejoicing and consoling thyself amidst thy Evils? Shall I add, that by this Joy in Sufferings, a Christian is enabled to confound the World and the Devil, which can surprise him no more by the Allurements of this Life, because the Joy of a Christian in the Evils that advance his Departure from this World, is a Proof of his Contempt for it, and of the ardent Desire he has to return to God? Ah! my Soul, how clearly it appears by thy Anguish and Uneasiness in thy Illness, that thou art little acquainted with the Mystery of the Cross, and the Operations of Grace that proceed from it! How plainly it appears that thou little relishest the Pleasure of Suffering something for Jesus Christ. It is true this Science is not known to Nature. But by consulting thy Faith and the Spirit of God, thou shalt find Sweetness and Joy in Sufferings, tho' they seem full of Bitterness and Sorrow in the Eyes of Flesh and Blood.

Heb. xii.

Cast often then the Eyes of thy Faith upon Jesus Christ who is the Author of it: all

all the Joys and Sweetness of Heaven were. *St. Chrys.*
 due to his Royal and Divine Condition; yet
 he willingly renounces them, in order to
 submit himself to the most unworthy Treat-
 ment that Man could suffer; he despises and
 looks upon, as nothing, all the Pains, Con-
 fusions and Ignominies of the cruel and
 infamous Death of the Cross, in order to *Heb. xii.*
 propose nothing to himself in his Sufferings,
 but the Comfort to have appeased his Fa-
 ther's Justice, and work'd the Salvation of
 Man.

Propose then to thyself, O my Soul, in *1 Pet. iv.*
 thine, the Joy to partake of the Sufferings
 of thy Saviour, and the Desire to fulfil
 what is wanting of his Passion in thee:
 Place thy whole Consolation in having it in
 thy Power to apply to thy self the Merit
 of his Death, by the Union and Confor-
 mity of thy Pains to his; on thy Bed look
 upon thyself as a Martyr of the Son of
 God, who has been martyr'd upon the Cross *St. Aug.*
 for thy Salvation, and will Crown thee at *Serm.*
 thy Departure out of this World: Rejoice *286.*
 in considering, that the Evils of this Life
 which are but light and momentary, are
 follow'd and rewarded with Glory infinite
 in its Weight, and eternal in its Duration: *2 Cor. iv.*
 Sing to the Lord Songs of Thanksgiving,
 that he is pleased to give thee still by Afflic-
 tions Marks of his Love, and acknowledge
 thee for his Child, notwithstanding thy fre-
 quent Disobedience to the Will of so good
 a Father: Thank him, if he permits thou
 shouldst not receive all the Ease thou wouldst
 wish

wish for in thy Pains, remembring thou so long failed'st in thy Obedience to his Orders. Acknowledge thy Dependence on his Will, by that Dependence thou hast on, those who come to assist thee ; adore the Tenderness of his Providence over thy spiritual Necessities in all thy corporal Wants, in order to stifle the Delicacy and Importunity of a Nature that has so often abused the Gifts of its Author. Let the Spirit of Penance inspire thee with a continual Thanksgiving to a God, who is pleased, thro' Mercy, to change the eternal Punishment thou hast so often deserv'd, into some short and temporary Pains. Transported with a filial Acknowledgment, incessantly say unto him : O my God, O my Father, how much, how great is the Consolation I receive from the Discipline and Rod with which thou strikest me ! I receive the Stripes of it with Joy ; redouble them as much as thou pleasest, provided thou dost not strike me in this World but to pardon me in the other. I shall be no more mindful of the Punishments which thou inflictest on me but of those which I beseech thee to forgive me. Remembring the eternal Chastisements I deserve, I shall no more complain of the Evils, to which thy Justice condemns me for a few Days. I consent to partake of the bitter Cup of my Saviour, to the last Moment of my Life, because its Bitterness is salutary and temper'd by thy Clemency ; provided thou dost not make me drink after Death of that which is prepar'd in thine Anger, and which is without any

Mixture

Pf. xxii.

Jak vi.

Pf. cxv.

Mixture of Mercy. Say unto my Soul departing out of this World, these sweet and comfortable Words: I afflicted, tried, corrected thee whilst thou livedst on Earth; but now there will be no more Affliction, Chastisements, or Trial for thee. Because thou hast received from my hand with Submission the Evils which I judged profitable for thy Salvation, I myself will be thy Comfort in Heaven, where I shall pour a Torrent of Delights on thee. *Nabum c.*

O my Jesus, who makest the Calm to follow the Tempest, and Joy often to succeed Tears, thou art witness to these which Nature, an Enemy to Sufferings, draws sometimes from my Eyes: Grant me, I beseech thee, in my Pains a little of that Joy thou hadst in thine, and of which thou gavest the Plenitude to thy Disciples; since by its means I shall have the Courage and Strength to bear them like a Christian. Cause by thy Grace that the Complaints, Sadness, Irksomeness and continual Motions of a Nature that has a Horreur for Sufferings, may not deprive me of that Love, that Peace, that Tranquillity of Mind, that Joy of Heart, which I look upon as one of the most precious Gifts proceeding from the Effusion of thy Grace upon Man, and which I instantly pray thee to grant me. *Tobia iii.*

Give me that Disposition of Heart in my Sufferings, which those faithful Disciples had, of whom it is said: "They rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for the Name of Jesus." *John c. xvi. & xvii.*

May

May the continual Remembrance of the Joys and Delights of Heaven render me insensible, or at least less attentive to the Dolors and Anguish of the Death I must undergo, in order to attain it. It was the Thoughts of that blessed Habitation that render'd *Job* invulnerable to all the Darts of Satan, and that made his Pains easy to him on his Dung-hill; the Joy he conceived by the Belief of a happy Resurrection, made him as it were unmindful of his present Sufferings; he look'd upon his Afflictions as a Seed of the eternal Life, which he expected; the Consideration of the unalterable Rest he hop'd one Day to enjoy, wiped off his Tears in the greatest Violence of his Pains.

*St. Bern.
in Expos.
2 Cor.*

Enter then, my Soul, into the Sentiments of this Man of Sorrow, against whom Heaven was shut for many Centuries, and persuaded that God opens it at the Death of every Christian, who lived, patiently in his Sufferings, cease not to repeat these comfortable Words: O Infirmity! O Sickness! O Pains! How great Joy and Satisfaction do you give me, since far from leading me to eternal Death, which I but too often deserved, thou conductest me, as I hope from the Goodness of God, to Life and Immortality. Happy Sickness, happy Infirmity, which from being the Pain and Chastisement of my Crimes, are changed, by the Mercy of the Lord, into Expiation, Reward, and a Crown of Glory! Let's add, my Soul (in order to animate us in our Sufferings) to that Plenitude of Joy the Apostle *St. James* requires: O precious Sickness

*Heb. xi.
& xiii.*

St. Francis

*St. Aug.
de Civit.*

Heb. xii.

Sickness and Afflictions, which mark the Christian with the Characteristick of the Elect; which detaching him from Creatures, unite him more strictly to his God, procure him the Honour of his Visit, and the Sweetness of his Consolations; incline him to humble himself in his Presence, and to have Recourse to him by frequent and ardent Prayers! O happy Trials, which reminding a Christian of the Thoughts of Death, ingage him to renounce Life, to think of his Departure out of this World, to keep himself upon his Guard, to purify his Conscience, to watch in Expectation of the Sovereign Judge, and sigh for his Return!

St. Hier.

But since Infirmities produce such salutary Effects in a Christian Soul, since they furnish him with so many Proofs of his Election for Heaven, and make the Acquisition of it so easy to him, what Thanks ought I not to give to the great Mercy of God, that my Life is consumed in Pains, and that my Days are past in Groans and Sufferings? What a Subject of Consolation and Joy is it that his Goodness has made me to undergo so many Trials? What Pleasure ought I not to have often felt, that thro' a wise and tender Disposition of his Providence I suffer'd some Pain for Jesus, who has suffer'd so much for me.

De Imit.
Christ.

Lib. i. c.

23.

Pf. xxx.

Et cxiv.

O my God, who soundest the bottom of Hearts, thou knowest if these are the Sentiments of mine; thou knowest if I have not oftentimes envied the Lot of those who enjoy Health and the Conveniences of Life;

Sap. i.

in

in spite of the *Anathema*, pronounced against such as are deem'd happy in this World by our Saviour himself, who does not promise his Kingdom but to those that suffer, feel, and groan under the Weight of the Miseries of our Peregrination. Thou knowest if thro' Impatience in my Sickness, I have not often prefer'd the Stroke of a quick Death that puts an End to all Sentiments of Pain, to the frequent Anguishes I so long suffer, and to the Bitterness of a State of Infirmary such as mine; thou knowest if I have not beheld my Afflictions but with the Eyes of Faith, which declares them the solid Foundation of Christian Hope, and the Object of the Vows of a Disciple of Christ. What a Confusion is it now to me, to have so behaved as to appear in thy Sight rather as a Jew, than a Christian. The Disposition of Heart, of a true Christian, is to rejoice in God, in Sicknes as in Health; to preserve the holy Joy of the Lord in the Evils, as well as Enjoyments of this Life; in the Days of Disgraces and Afflictions, as in the Days of Favours and Prosperity; to submit to, and accept with the Joy of the Holy Ghost, the Orders of his God, even in the greatest Dolors with which he is pleased to try or purify him; because he is convinced that this alternative of Good and Evil, enters into the Designs of Salvation that God has upon him. The Jew on the contrary rejoices not in God, but whilst he receives Benefits and Favours from him, he blesses not his Holy Name, but whilst he sends him the Fat of the

Ecccl. xxx.

Philip. iv.

*St. Aug.
Lib. x. de
Civit.
Dei.*

the

the Earth, and the Abundance of its Fruits: When this supreme Wisdom withdraws its temporal Blessings from the Jew, then he grows sad, is chagrined, impatient, and murmurs at the Dispositions of Providence always adorable in its Conduct: And this, O Lord, is what I always or at least often have been. Far from rejoicing in my Sufferings, because I then was in the happy Condition to please thee; far from having received Sickness as one of thy most singular Benefits; far from looking upon it as a favourable Time, in which thou in thy Mercy didst visit me, I was provoked at it; I refused to receive it as a Favour; I look'd upon as bad the Remedy thou presented'st me, for all the Wounds of my Soul; I gave myself over to an Excess of Sadness, and drew thy Indignation upon me by my Murmurings: My Sufferings, far from being a Subject of Edification to those who were Witnesses of them, were, on the contrary, a terrible Scandal to them; my Complaints, my Irksomeness, my Impatience, which have so often disturbed the Peace of others, have caused Troubles in my Soul, which have often made me to doubt of my Salvation. And what Confusion and Fear am I in, to have shewn so much Sorrow, Grief and Despondency in my Sufferings; to have express'd so much Disgust and Dissatisfaction to them. How ashamed I am to have been so faithless to the Grace of my Saviour, the Virtue of which is to inspire Gratefulness and Joy in Afflictions. I lament, O my God, to have so little corresponded.

St. Bern.

Osee ii.

ponded with the Designs thou hadst to wean me from the present Life, by the Bitterness with which thou fillest it.

Rom. viii.

Pardon me, O Lord, my too great Love for it; pardon me for having too much desired and sought for Comfort to this sinful Body, that deserved but the Rigors of the severest Penance; pardon me for shunning the Evils with which thou striked'st it, or using so many Endeavours to deliver it from them; pardon me for having so often hearken'd, contrary to the Prohibition of the Church, to the Demands of a rebellious Flesh, of which the Ruin would have been so salutary to my Soul; pardon me for the Mortification and Grief I have so often given to those who were Witnesses of my Sufferings, and endeavour'd to help me in them.

Pf. ix.

The only Remedy that remains to me, O my God, is to throw myself into the Arms of thy Mercy; to beseech thee to cast thine Eyes on the Evils that encompass and oppress me; to beg of thee to remember, that in this Place of Affliction, in this Vale of Tears, invested and overwhelm'd with so much Misery, often struck with the frightful Image of Death, and seiz'd with the Horrors of the Grave, I cannot esteem myself happy, and have Joy and Consolation in my Evils, if thou dost not give me this salutary Joy, if thou dost not grant me thy holy Blessing, and if thou dost not pour thy Grace into my Heart. I hope for it then from thee, O Divine Legislator, and it is by its Succour thou wilt

Ecc. x.

*Pf. l. &
lxxxiii.*

wilt make me to advance from Virtue to Virtue; that is to say, after inspiring me with the Love and Joy of thy Apostle for Sufferings, thou wilt make me bear them like him with Courage and Perseverance.

C H A P. V.

Of Courage requisite to support a CHRISTIAN in the Languors of Sickness.

YES, my Soul, thou canst not make sure *2 Tim. ii.*
thy Triumph and Reward in Heaven,
but by bearing with Courage the different
and dolorous Attacks of Sickness. Engaged
by thy Baptism to a Self-renunciation and to
follow thy Saviour, by daily carrying the *Luke ix.*
Cross, thou wilt not deserve the Title of be-
ing his Disciple, if thou be weary of carry-
ing his Yoke, if the Weight of his Cross
discourages and dejects thee; thou wilt not
be fit for his Kingdom, if thou followest not
his Steps, if thou endeavourest not to enter *St. Bern.*
it under his Banner, if thou ascendest not,
after his Example, by the different Degrees of
a hard and suffering Life, if thou raisest not
thyself like him by the Sweat of thy Brow,
and if the Motions of thy Heart be not an
ardent Desire, and a strong Effort to enter by
the narrow Door of a happy Eternity. One *St. Greg.*
is not crown'd but after having fought with *Mag.*
Courage and Fidelity till Death; cheer up *2 Tim. ii.*
thyself then, my Soul, exert thy Courage
and Constancy in thy Sufferings, in Consideration

ration of what Jesus suffer'd for thee even to his Death; for he does not exhort thee to it, but after undergoing himself the most violent and cruel Torments for thy Sake.

Since he took upon himself the Resemblance of a Sinner, since he was charged by his Father with the great Work of Man's Salvation, since he became a Surety for them to his Justice, he began to make Satisfaction by chearfully undergoing the hardest Labours, by passing the Nights in Prayer, and the Days in Tears, Sighs and most painful Exercises. If in the whole Course of his mortal Life he appear'd for a few Minutes on *Mount-Tabor*, inviron'd with the Splendor of Glory, always due to his Innocence and Sanctity, it was but to fortify the Apostles in the Belief of his Divinity, against the Scandal of the Cross, to which his Love for Man was to fix him; as for him, he discoursed with *Moses* and *Elias*, on the cruel Torments he was to suffer in *Jerusalem*; his Soul and Heart, far from being mindful of the Splendor of the Divine Majesty that incompass'd him, was only occupied with the great Sacrifice of his Passion and Death; incessantly wishing for the Moment it was to be consummated on *Mount-Calvary*; and when he there found his Strength exhausted by the Effusion of his Blood, and by the mortal Wounds with which his Body was cover'd, with a new Effort of Love for Man, he cried out to his Father, in these his last Words, *John xix.* *Consummatum est.* The Work of the World's Salvation, which I had undertaken by thy Orders,

John xvii.

*St. Leo.
Hom. de
Transfig.*

*Matth.
viii.*

Orders, O my Father, is now finish'd and accomplish'd.

Thy Indignation against Man diminish'd, in Proportion to the Satisfaction I made thy Justice by my Sweats, Fatigues, Prayers and Tears; but it is after seeing me spill the last Drop of my Blood, and give my Life for them, that thou hast been reconciled to them, and given them the Kifs of an everlasting Peace; it is but by my Death that I have intirely destroy'd in myself the Resemblance of Sin, I had taken upon myself, and that I cease to bear the Image of a Sinner. *Pf. lxxxiv.*

Behold, my Soul, the Model of the Conduct with which thou oughtst to have always behaved since thy Baptism: All thy Life, in Imitation of that of Jesus, should have been a continual Penance; as a Christian, it should have been a Warfare, a Conflict, a Martyrdom, a dying and crucified Life. Hadst thou preserved the Grace of thy Regeneration in Jesus Christ, thou wouldst not be dispensed from it, because the Life of a Christian, is a Life of Crosses and Pains; for that Propension to Evil that remains in a Christian to his Death, and which is the fatal and unexhaustable Source of the Temptations he suffers during his Life, that Rebellion of his Senses, these daily Faults inseparable from human Frailty, that Yoke laid on thee by Jesus Christ thy Master and Judge, the View of Heaven which is not consistent but with Violence and continual Efforts; all this should engage thee to incessantly walk in the Path of Mortification, and to be willing never to end. *Conc. Tr. Sess. xiv. St. Aug. St. Aug.*

2 Cor. c.
i. v. 8.

Cap. v.

St. Bern.

end thy Days, but under the Weight of Penance, in order to be able to say to Death, as the great Apostle, as *Anthony, Paul, Hilarion, Marcellus, Theresa*, and an infinit Number of others, all dead to the World and themselves: I have finish'd my Course, I am come to the end of my Career, I have touch'd the Goal of my Life; it has been very melancholy and painful to Nature, it has often given me Vexation, and drawn Tears from me; but thro' the Mercy of my Saviour, I have kept faithful to his Orders in the severe Trials which he has done me the Favour to make me bear; and as my Life had some Resemblance with his, I die in hope of that Crown of Justice reserved for me in the Day of his Coming; Thrice happy to quit this Body under the Weight of which I have so long groan'd, in order to go to enjoy the Presence of our Lord. Ah! my Jesus, how far am I from being in a Condition to use the Words of thy Apostle to thee; how far am I from having been faithful to thee as I ought, all the Days of my Life! I am ashamed, and at the same time penetrated with Grief, for having been unfaithful to my baptismal Promises, for having behaved so contrary to my Engagements with thee; thy Mercy is the only Refuge I can have for my Salvation.

Add, my Soul, to that Obligation of the continual Penance of the Righteous, that which obliged thee as a Sinner, never to cease shedding Tears for the Loss of thy baptismal Innocence, to incessantly implore his
Mercy

Mercy by the Rigors of Penance, to appease his Justice by the perpetual Oblation of an humble Spirit, and contrite Heart; to continually consider with a salutary Regret, those Days of Iniquity, those Months, those Years of Injustice wherein thou hast lived. *Isaiab xxxviii.*

Dost thou not know, that supposing the Goodness of God had pardon'd thee thy Sins, as it did *David's* (of which thou hast not the same Degree of Certainty that sinful but penitent Prince had) dost thou not know, I say, that this Goodness of God does not destroy the Right of his Justice, and that in granting to a true and sincere Sorrow the *Remission of Sin*, it incontinently imposes a Penance as long as Life? How much then have I been mistaken, O my Jesus, to have often thought, at least as it appear'd by the Irregularity of my Conduct, that thy Tears must have dry'd up the Source from which mine flow'd; that the Penance thou hast done for the Expiation of my Sins, dispensed me from doing it myself, and that the Merit of thy adorable Blood would be applied to me, without living and dying in the Works of Christian Mortification. *Deut. xxxviii.*

I render thy Providence, all merciful in my Favour, a thousand Thanks for procuring me, by Infirmary, the Means of supplying what has been deficient in my Repentance, which should never cease until I cease to be; since Infirmary has not only the Sharpness of a Sword to cut the fatal Links which tye me to Creatures, but the Weight of a Hammer, to break my Body and Heart in thy Presence, *St. Amb.*

St. Aug.

*St. Fulgen.
Episc. vii.*

Presence, for having loved them contrary to thy Orders; and to make of the one and the other, a Sacrifice of Expiation always agreeable in thy Sight.

Jerem. i.

O my God, finding myself unable, thro' the Infirmities of my Body, to exercise on myself the Rigors of Penance, grant me true Sorrow for having so much neglected it thro' Effeminacy and Cowardise, and Grace to supply it, not only by a sincere Will to embrace it till Death, if ever I come to recover my Health; but by a stedfast and constant Courage to bear, the rest of my Days, all the Evils it shall please thee to send me.

Rom. viii.

Is it not likewise an Effect of an all-gratuitous Mercy, to make me avoid, by a few Days Pain here, the incomprehensible Pains of Eternity. What! if the Saints, if all the Just, while they suffer'd the most sensible and the sharpest Pains, have declared that Heaven was given almost for nothing, and that there was no Proportion between the Sufferings of this Life, and the Glory they procure us in the other; have I not a double Motive to bear mine with Love and Courage, seeing the Goodness of God annexes the same Reward to them, and makes me avoid by them the Rigors of his Justice.

Judith vii.

O my Lord, and my God, I shall never cease to publish the Wonders of thy Mercy, while thou preservest me upon Earth: Grant I may also sing them for all Eternity, that my whole Occupation may, for the future, be to shew thee my Gratitude, for that in punishing my Infidelities by the Pains of Sicknes,

*Psaln
lxxxviii.*

Sickness, it pleaseth thee to forgive and forget them; that in purifying my Soul by Sufferings, it pleaseth thee to deliver it after Death from the Flames of Purgatory; that in acknowledging me, by the sharp Pains I suffer, the Disciple of Jesus, and thy Child, thou raisest me up to Christian Hope, and permittest me to look still upon Heaven as my Portion and my Inheritance. *St. Aug. in PS.*

Cast then often, my Soul, the Eyes of thy Faith towards that holy Habitation of the heavenly Father; think often of that happy Place of Abode, and of the Happiness of those who inhabit it; there is no Object fitter to prevent Despondency and human Frailty, and to animate thee to Constancy in thy greatest Sufferings.

All the Saints and Just, of both Testaments, have borne with Courage the greatest Misfortunes, most sensible Pains and cruel Torments, by considering the Reward they should receive for it in Heaven: Towards which they continually bent their Thoughts, persuaded that they should therein see the happy Day of Eternity, that they should be deliver'd by it from the Evils of this miserable Life, and find in God all the Good their Heart could Desire. *Heb. xi.*

It is the Hopes of Heaven made them, not only steadfast and courageous under the greatest Tribulations, but victorious over Torments and Death itself: For it is not enough to fight, one must overcome; the Kingdom of God is not given but to the victorious; all the Saints, who are in Possession of it, carry Palms

*Tertul.
Lib. de
Conf.
Mart.*

Apoc. vii. Palms in their Hands as a Proof and Mark of the Conquest they have made of it. I shall make to sit with me and on my Throne, says our Saviour, those who shall have conquer'd, as I am seated myself with my Father in his Throne, because I have been victorious over the Dolors of the Cross. Come, says he again, partake of my Honour and Glory, ye who have follow'd me in my Passion, ye who have carry'd my Cross with inviolable Stedfastness, and drank of my Cup, even to Death.

Lib. iii. de Imit. Christ. c. 47. Ah! my Soul, if thou represented'st often to thyself the Glory of the Triumph which God prepares in Heaven for the victorious; if thou didst but think often of the immortal Crowns with which the Saints are adorn'd, because they pass'd their Life in Tribulations and Pains, thou wouldst be more glad to suffer in Obedience to God's Orders, and in Conformity with thy Saviour, than to enjoy Strength and Health, ever desirable, I grant, to a Nature averse to Sufferings, but always less proper for attaining the Sanctity necessary to enter into Heaven. Thou wouldst say with the Apostle: I place my whole Consolation in the Afflictions I suffer for Jesus, who alone can make my Felicity and Happiness after my Death.

2 Cor. xii. What is there in Effect, my Soul, so hard, so painful and dolorous, but thou oughtst to suffer with a good Heart and Constancy, to enjoy Jesus Christ in Heaven? Canst thou hesitate a Moment to give all thou possessest, even thy very Life, in order to procure thyself

self the eternal Possession of a Good that surpasses all that can be said or thought of it; a Good worthy the Omnipotence, Liberality and Magnificence of a God; a Good that is the Price of the Labours and Blood of Jesus Christ; a Good with which all the Sufferings of the Saints, great as they were, has no Proportion; a Good that is alone capable to satisfy all the Desires of the Heart of Man; a Good that constitutes God's own Beatitude as well as that of his Elect. St. Aug.

O how amiable and precious must the Afflictions of this Life be, that are so highly rewarded in the other! O lucky Change! O happy Death that deprives us of a short and painful Life, to give us a Life of Rest during all Eternity. I would very willingly lose the one, said St. Bernard, to everlastingly possess the other. Such is, O my Soul, the Language of the Just, while their Eyes are lifted up to Heaven. If thou didst consider, as they did, the Happiness of those who inhabit the celestial *Jerusalem*, if thou wert thoroughly convinced of it as they were, how durst thou to even once complain of thy Afflictions? Is it not just to suffer all manner of Pains and Tribulations for the everlasting Life that is promised thee? Is not Grace given to a Christian in order to fight? Is not the Conquest of the Kingdom of Heaven of the greatest Importance, and ought we not to use all Endeavours, to gather all our Strength, to make the greatest Efforts to procure us the Possession of it. Sap. iii.
Lib. iii.
de Imit.
Christ. c.
xlvii.

D

Behold

Behold thy Saviour and his Saints, who did not enter into Heaven but after having suffer'd long and violent Conflicts upon Earth; it was but by the way of Tribulations and Sufferings that they attain'd that Place of Rest and eternal Felicity. Thus, my Soul, thy Victory over the Evils of this Life must bear Resemblance with his, in order to have Share in his Triumph; thou canst not ascend his Throne but after having constantly walk'd in his Steps, ever painful to a cowardly and sensual Nature. The View of Heaven must inspire thee with this Christian Generosity, and put into thy Hand that Sword which thy Divine Master came to bring into the World, not only to fight, but to overcome this inordinate Love of Life, to strip thee of this terrestrial Man that bends thee towards the Earth, to break and destroy this sinful Body, which ties thee to Creatures, and obstructs thy Reunion with God.

Matth. x.

St. Bern.

Heb. xii.

Ah! my Lord, how late am I come to the Knowledge of these solid and holy Truths, how little have I meditated and relished them, and that to indulge my Delicacy and Sensuality: I lament in thy Presence my Indolence, I am ashamed of my Weakness and Cowardice. O my Soul, oughtst thou not often to say in the Violence of thy Sufferings? What! thou hast never given a Drop of Blood for the Service of thy God, who has been so profuse in spilling his for thee, and thou dar'st complain of thy Pains. What! thou refus'st to have some Share in the Sufferings

ferings of thy Saviour; what! thou fearest to partake of his Pains, which are the Way and Pledge of Salvation. Ah! if the Righteous is scarce saved, if he does not attain *Prov. xi.* Heaven but through a great deal of Tribu- 31. lations, if he does not make a Conquest of the Kingdom of God, but by the most violent Efforts, what will become of a delicate and slothful Sinner, unwilling to suffer?

Wouldst thou that, at the Hour of Death, God should not acknowledge thee as one of *Heb. xii.* his beloved Children, seeing he tries by Afflictions those whom he Loves, and what will be thy Lot if disown'd of God, and consequently, excluded from his Inheritance? Nothing else but Reprobation and Hell. And hast thou, my Soul, ever thoroughly consider'd the Rigor and Eternity of its Pains? What! *Isa. xxxiii.* after being indebted to the Divine Mercy for not having long since condemn'd thee to it, for the Number of Sins thou hast committed, oughtst thou not to be thankful that it pleaseth him to cleanse thee of them by Sicknes, in order to render thee worthy of his Kingdom; be never then tired of Sufferings, fight generously the Fight of Faith *2 Thess. i.* have recourse to the Arms which God pre- c. sents thee, to procure to thyself the eternal Life which is promised thee: Behold Jesus, who is crown'd in Heaven with Honour and Glory, for the Pains and Death he *Heb. ii.* suffer'd on Earth: he is the Model of the Conflicts which he orders thee to sustain after his Example, and of the Victory which he wills thou shouldst obtain over the Evils

that inviron thee: as he has consummated the Work of thy Salvation on the Cross, by the Effusion of his Blood, in order to apply the Merits of it to thee, he wills thou shouldst be consumed and destroyed by the Dolors of Sicknes and Death itself.

Ephef. iii. Be not discouraged then, my Soul, by the Tedioufiness and Violence of the Pains that successively oppress thee, call to Mind the Virtues of Patience, Generosity and Con-

Heb. xii. stancy so necessary for thee, remembering thou accomlishest the Will of God in patiently suffering, and procurest to thyself the eternal Happiness with which he promises to crown thy Afflictions; awake and animate thy Courage, for fear of drawing on thyself the Curse that God pronounces against those who lose Courage in the Trial, which he is pleased to make them undergo.

Ecc. ii. It is true, one must have a most heroick Patience and Fortitude, when Sufferings are so tedious and the Combat so violent; but remember that God's Punishments, as well as his Rewards, are everlasting: That the same God, who declares he will not permit us to be tempted beyond our Strength, will likewise have us to use all Efforts on our Side to resist Temptation. What! my Soul, oughtst thou not to say to thyself, when press'd by Despondency and Impatience, since God is faithful in his Promises, ought I not to be likewise so in the Execution of his Orders? Besides, does not an eternal Rest and Happiness deserve to be purchased by infinite Labour? And seeing the Goodness of God
does

1st Cor. x.

does not require of thee this just Price of St. *Aug.*
 his Kingdom, since in order to grant it thee, *in. Pf.*
 he is pleased to accept of only a few Days xxxvi.
 of Pains and Sufferings; make thy Advan- St. *Greg.*
 tage then of these precious Moments meri- M. *Hom.*
 torious of eternal Happiness; let the hopes xxxvii.
 thou art in of attaining Heaven animate thee
 in thy Sufferings; let the Ardour of thy Cou-
 rage supply for the short Time that remains
 to thee to make a Conquest of it; look upon
 thyself as the Labourer in the Gospel who
 began not his Work but at the last Hour,
 and to whom the Goodness of God gave
 the same Wages he did to those who had
 laboured from the Morning of their Life,
 which is Youth; the Reward is great, see- St. *Aug.*
 ing it is no other but God himself. The Har- *Epist.*
 vest of Merit and Glory which thou shalt cxliii.
 gather in at Death, will last forever; strive
 then with thy whole Might to obtain it by
 the Fidelity and Stedfastness of thy Courage.

But, remember, my Soul, that if Jesus
 Christ is the Model of the Victory, he com-
 mands thee to get over thy Sufferings and
 Death, he himself is also the Author and
 principal Cause of it: Thou art too weak to St. *Bern.*
 fight and overcome thyself; it must be by *Ser. de*
 the Assistance of the Grace of Jesus Christ *Dedic.*
 thou canst surmount that Repugnance thou
 hast for Sickness and Death, and that Inclina-
 tion for Life and Health; convinced of thy
 own Weakness cease not to implore his As-
 sistance, ever giving him the Glory and Ho-
 nour of the Victory; thrice happy for thee I *Cor. xv.*

to receive the Fruits and Reward of it from his liberal Hand.

John xy.

Yes, O my Jesus, I confess and believe on thy Word, that without thy Succour, I cannot break the Links which tye me to Creatures, or wean myself from the Life of the Body; without thy Grace I cannot consent to its Ruin and Destruction, or look on

Job vi.

the Evils that compass me as light, much less bear them with Patience: For I continually feel my Weakness, inclining to complain of them. Thou thyself, O Lord, seest and knowest this Weakness incident to my

*St. Aug.
Trac. lxi.
in Joan.*

Nature: It would be Rashness in me, to dare answer for my Good-will and brag of my Strength in patiently suffering the Evils that come from thy Hand. Thou knowest I cannot perform what I promised thee, without thy own Assistance: For, being incapable to form of myself one good Thought, as coming from myself, or conceive in my Heart any Desire salutary to my Soul; how dare I believe myself capable of practising, without thy Help, Virtues which inspire me with the Hatred of myself, and prompt me to bear Evils that tend to the Dissolution of a Life so dear to me?

St. Aug.

No, O Lord, without thy Succour, on which I wholly depend, I succumb and perish. Unhappy am I, if I cease but a Moment to place my Confidence in thee; my Loss is inevitable, if I seek not thy Protection; come then to my Assistance, considering my Weakness and pressing Necessities; cast a favourable

*Oratio
Eccl.*

able look on me from thy Throne; infuse thy Grace into my Heart, to the end I may bear patiently and become victorious over the Pains of Sickness and Death itself: Be thou Witness of the painful and oppressing Condition to which I am reduced; but always join thy Mercy to thy Looks. Be not a Spectator of my Sufferings but in order to *Pf. xxiv.* help me to peaceably bear them.

Thou assurest me, O my Jesus, that whenever I shall have Recourse to thee in my Necessities, thou wilt be ready to come to my Assistance, and as there is no Condition poorer or weaker than that which I now am in, pour upon me the Abundance of thy holy Grace; grant me Strength to persevere *Pf. lxvii.* in the good Dispositions thou hast given me; finish what thou hast begun in me, to the end I may say with a great Saint, whose Life was but Crosses and Afflictions: O Weakness! O Infirmary! O Sickness! How precious and desirable art thou, seeing thou procurest me the Occasion of flying to the Mercy of my Saviour, and begging the Succour of his holy Grace. *St. Bern.*

Yes, O my Jesus, convinced of the Fidelity of thy Promises, I hope thou wilt not permit that Temptation, almost inseparable from painful Trials, should get the better of me, and that thou wilt give me Strength not only to resist but to overcome.

For I acknowledge, O my God, in order to publish thy Mercies in Favour of me, that without the Succour of thy Grace, which has often sweeten'd in my Soul the Bitter-

Pſalm
lxxxiii.
&c. cxviii.

ness of Sickneſs, and render'd poſſible that which, without it, is impoſſible to Nature, I ſhould long ſince have loſt Courage, murmur'd at my Lot, and drawn thine Indignation upon me. In Effect, O Saviour of my Soul; attentive to the Sighs and Groans occaſioned by the Violence and long Duration of my Sufferings, how often haſt thou aſſiſted, fortified and conſoled me, by the Uñction of thy Grace? How often haſt thou drawn near, and made me interiorly hear theſe comfortable Words: Take Courage; I am with thee not only as thy God, but united to thee, and ſuffer in thee as thy Head?

Jer. Lam.
c. iii.

Septon. iii.

O my Soul, ſince thou haſt ſo often experienced the Divine Aſſiſtance in the violent Temptations of Infirmities, while thou thoughteſt of Jeſus, and conſideredſt thyſelf as one of his Members; conſider no more thy Pains in themſelves, but look on them in the Perſon of thy Saviour, who having borne them all to make them ſalutary to thee, has conſecrated them, by his Example, and ſoftens them by the Uñction of his Grace.

De Imit.
Chriſt. c.
xxv.

Embrace often his Croſs, reflect on the incomprehenſible Dolors he ſuffer'd on it for Love of thee, and thine will become light and agreeable by paralleling one with the other. Inceſſantly tell him, thou haſt the Honour of being his Diſciple, and one of his Members; perſevere in following his Steps and carrying his Yoke, and earneſtly beg that his Grace may come to the Aſſiſtance of thy Weakneſs and ſtrengthen thee. Conſider often that Jeſus has paſs'd from the Death

Death of the Cross to a glorious Life, in Heaven, in order to make the Succours and Graces he merited on that Instrument of thy Salvation to descend upon thee.

O Cross of my Jesus, which art so salutary to me, which art my Support, my Strength and only Hope, present thyself to my Eyes, and be for the future the only Object of them, to inspire my Heart with thy Love. May thy Ignominies be always agreeable to me through Gratitude, seeing it is by thy Means the Work of my Salvation has been finished.. *St. Bern.*

C H A P. VI.

Cross of JESUS Principle and Model of the holy Dispositions of a CHRISTIAN in Sicknefs.

O MY Jesus, in acknowledging and confessing thee on the Cross the only Son of the heavenly Father, the Image and Substance of God himself, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, of Angels and Men, the God in whom all things subsist, and from whom every Creature receives his Being, Motion and Life; thou art thereon the Object of my Homage and Adoration: But in acknowledging thee likewise upon this Cross the Son of God made Man, become passible and mortal for my Salvation, thou art the Object of my Gratitude, Love and Imitation. *Collos. i. c. v. 16, 17- Ibidem. v. xxii.*

Inspire me upon this Bed of Sorrow, where thou beholdest me, with the Sentiments and Dispositions, favourable to my Salvation, which thou hadst on the Cross; grant that in meditating on them I may relish them, and in relishing them, I may be docile and faithful to them, as thou hast been to the Will of thy Father, in the overwhelming Pains of thy Passion and Death.

A R T I C L E I.

*The Sick Christian hearten'd at the Sight
of Jesus on the Cross, giving his Life
for his Flock, as the good Shepherd.*

John. x.

IT is on this Cross, O my Jesus, thou art the good Shepherd, who delivers himself up to Death for the Salvation of his Flock; I have the Happiness to be of the Number by my Baptism; thou hast received me from the Hand of thy Father by this Sacrament, in order to defend me from that infernal Fiend, that seeks my Ruin and Perdition: But what Labours, Sweats, Fatigues and Torments has this Quality of Shepherd exposed thee to for me? What Care and ardent Zeal hast thou used to bring me back from my Strayings to thy Flock, which thou so dearly lovest? How hast thou enter'd into the Particulars of the Sicknefs, Languors and other spiritual Necessities of my Soul, in order to cure and remedy them at the Expence of thy own very Life? Thou hast given for my Salvation this holy and Divine Life, O my

1 Pet. ii.

my Jesus, not thro' the Pains of Sickness, or any Weakness of Age and Nature, but by the cruel and infamous Death of the Cross; because thou wouldst not take on thyself the Title of Pastor of our Souls, but after *Hier.* having been for us the propitiatory Lamb, *Hom.* the Victim offer'd and consumed in the bloody *xxviii.* Mystery of thy Passion.

Couldst thou, O my Jesus, become the Pastor of my Soul by a juster Title? Does not thy Blood, which has been the Price of it, ingage me to be always thankful for the Purchase thou hast made of it, by bearing in my Body the Image and Resemblance of thy Sufferings? Such are the Marks by which thou knowest thy Sheep: And as I am of the Number, thou warnest me to be always ready to receive the Afflictions which I am to suffer after thy Example: And the time is now come to indure them; what Mercy, O my Jesus, that I have not the false Peace of this World for my Lot, as many others who quietly enjoy its Pleasures and Happiness, who elated with the Suggestions of a destructive Pride, and following the inordinate Desires of their Hearts, become the Devil's Flock, and Victims to everlasting Death.

What Mercy to make me suffer the Evils of this Life, that I may not suffer everlasting Torments in the next. Once more, my Jesus, what Mercy to make me walk in thy Steps by Afflictions; to lead me after thee in the Paths of Justice, wherein thou vouchsafest to be as a Shepherd to me, and so to make me fullfil by the Sufferings of
this

1 *Pet.* ii.

this present Life, the Condition to which thou hast annex'd my Salvation for all Eternity! One cannot enjoy the Felicity of that blessed Habitation, without going through the Evils of this Land of Bondage: One cannot drink of the Torrent of Delights with which the Saints are transported in Heaven, but after having drank, like them, of the Torrent of Bitterness in this World; before a Christian is admitted to the Face of his Lord in Glory; he must behold his Back carrying the Cross, and partake of it with him, by an humble Acceptation of the Pains of this Life, before he gathers, in the Bosom of God, a plentiful Harvest of transporting Joy; he must sow in Groans and Tears, by continually feeling the Miseries of this Body, which separates us from him, before he enters into the celestial Country, the Inhabitants whereof taste the Sweetness of Rest, and are in Ecstasies of everlasting Joy; he must live a while in the Land of those Doves, who lament and suffer for the Absence of their Divine Spouse. I had often promised thee, O Sovereign Pastor of my Soul, to be attentive to thy Call, and faithful to follow thee, be it it ever so painful so to do, but it is now thou requirest the Trial of it: Thou expectest not Words but Works. In Effect, in order to bear Resemblance with thee, one must suffer and die with thee. O my Soul, oughtst thou not often to say to thyself, if the Love and Goodness of thy Divine Pastor has exposed him to so much Pain, and engaged him to give his very Life to make thee enter

Ps. cxxv.*James* i.

enter into the Flock of his heavenly Father; oughtst thou not to give thine with a good Heart, as an Acknowledgment of so great a Favour? As this good Shepherd has redeem'd thee by the Price of his Blood, which he shed on the Cross with so much Constancy, oughtst thou not to apply the Merit of it to thyself, by offering him thine, not only without repining, but with Submission, in the Pains of Sickness?

What Happiness it is to become by Afflictions and Sufferings one of God's Flock! What an Advantage it is to be of the Number of his true and beloved Sheep, whom this good Shepherd often feeds with the Bread of Tears on Earth, to make them long for the eternal Pasture of Heaven! What a Comfort it is in the Anguish of Pain, to consider that the Cross is the Portion of the Friends of God, and that his Mercy measures the Greatness of Love which he bears his Elect, by the Number of Afflictions he makes them suffer in this World! What Joy it is to be own'd at the Hour of Death, as a Sheep sacrificed in Imitation of Jesus! What Triumph to be then presented by the holy Angels at the Tribunal of the Sovereign Judge, with the Testimony of a Life consumed by the Labours of Penance, or by the Pains of Sickness! It is his Cross that will decide in that Moment thy eternal Doom; if thou art willing that it should then be a Sign of Benediction and Salvation, make it now the Object of thy Love and Imitation.

1 John iii. 16.

St. Aug. c. ii. de Ovib.

Psal. lxxviii. Ec. lxxix.

2 ad Tim. ii 19, Ec. St. Bern.

Look

Look upon the Pains and Tribulations of this Life, as the Foundation of the Happiness promised thee in the next; embrace with a good Heart all the Occasions of suffering and Trial, which the Goodness of God procures thee; esteem thyself happy, when he treats thee as he did his own Son; enter willingly into the Designs and Views of this dear Son thy Saviour, who having undergone the Dolors and Death of the Cross, in order to procure thee the Life of Grace, and a Right to his Father's Kingdom, takes care to preserve in thee these happy Advantages, by the salutary Stripes of Tribulation, by

Isa. xlvi. which he himself has merited them for you; because having within us a Fund of Self-love and Desire of Independence (the fatal Source of our Strayings from the ways of Salvation) if this charitable Shepherd do not continually watch to guard our Souls, if he do not stop up the way, that leads us to Perdition with a Hedge of Thorns, according to the Expression of a Prophet; if, by the Evil which he heaps on us, he do not sustain us in the Declivity of the Abyss to which we run, if, even in order to render our Hearts steadfast in Goodness, he do not mix Bitters

St. Bern. with our Pleasures, because they may retard us in our Course to Heaven, where we always ought to tend; if, I say, this wise and good Shepherd do not use these Means afflicting to Nature, we shall stray from his Care

Ps. cxviii. like lost Sheep, and incur the Danger of eternal Ruin.

In testifying then, my Soul, thy Acknowledgment to this Divine Saviour for being mindful of thee, when thou hadst forgot him; *St. Aug. l. vi. Conf.* for having fought thee, when thou straidst from him; for following thee, when thou shunnedst him, and for bringing thee back when thou wentst out of the way; declare unto him, that since the quality of Pastor of our Souls has drawn upon him the most rigorous Usage from the Justice of his Father, thou consentest that he should use thee in the same manner, in order to have the happy Title of one of his Flock.

O my Jesus, cease not then to hold over me the Rod of Affliction, so necessary to lead and preserve me among those, who are to possess thine Inheritance: Continue to use the salutary Discipline of Sickness, so proper to make me attentive to thy Will, and conformable to thy Example. *Jerem. x.* In the Days of my Health I gloried in being of the Number of thy Disciples, and while I appear'd in the Eyes of Men to hearken to, and follow the Voice of thy Grace, I very often follow'd only that of my blind Passions. Pardon me, my Jesus, for my Infidelities; I have, through the Assistance of thy Grace, taken my Resolution; I firmly purpose to employ the rest of my Days in thy Service; I am willing to follow thee in this new way *Id. c. xviii.* of Tribulation and Sufferings which thy holy Humanity has traced out for me: But I hope, that in following thee, thou wilt take care of me, support me against the Efforts of my Enemies, and fortify me by thy Grace and *Pf. xxii.*
the

the Virtue of thy sacred Body, which is the Food my Soul requires now more than ever.

For, O my Divine Pastor, thou knowest that being but weak and infirm of myself, I cannot, without thy Grace, have the Resolution necessary to follow thee in that Path full of Thorns and Brambles, which thou tracest for me by thy Example, and wherein thou commandest me to walk after thee. Since thy Mercy is pleased to own me as one of thy Sheep, by the dolorous Mark of Tribulation, in order to shew my Acknowledgment thereof, grant I may correspond by an entire Submission to thy holy Will; give me attentive Ears, and a constant and faithful Heart to hear and obey thy Voice; let thy Grace direct my Steps, and support my Weakness, in the painful Path that is to bring me to thee: Deliver up my Body, if it please thee, to the most violent Pains, expose it to the Danger of perishing, draw it near to the Horrors of the Grave, cover it, with the Image of Death; I should expect all these Miseries, as the just Punishment of my Sins: But for my Soul, revive it, convert it more and more to thee, by the interior Unction of thy holy Spirit; feed it with that celestial Bread which is the Life of it; put it under the Protection of thy Mercy, and powerfully support it by the Succour of thy Grace, in the Fatigues, Bitterness and Weakness, it must meet with in the way that yet remains to conduct it to thee; be mindful that I am but a poor, weak, infirm and sick Creature; consider me as that poor Sheep of which a Prophet

St. Bonav.

Cant. &

*Pf. xxii.
& lxxviii.*

Pf. lxxiii.

Prophet

Prophet speaks, exposed to the Insults of many Enemies that attack me within and without, with a Design to separate me from that Flock, which is to enjoy the Effect of thy Promises; without thee, I cannot avoid becoming a Prey to their Violence and their Fury; consider thou art my Lord and my God; remember thou hast declared thyself my Shepherd from my earliest Youth, that thou hast hitherto given me Marks of thy most tender Love, and the most secret Assurances of thy Protection; continue then, I beseech thee, thy Vigilance and Care over me, in the painful Paths of the Tribulation I am in; be my Guide to my very Entrance into the celestial Sion, where all my Vows and Desires tend; permit not that the Hardship of the Journey should ever make me to give myself up to Murmurings and Impatience; but grant that, by thy Grace, these very Hardships, and all the other Accidents of my Passage, be they ever so sorrowful, may serve to raise me more and more towards thee, and unite me to thee for ever; behold the holy Covenant thou hast made with me, and seal'd with thy precious Blood on the Cross, thro' the Virtue of which I address myself to thee for Succour.

O Cross of my Saviour! O salutary Sign of our Redemption! O glorious Trophy of the Divine Power! Be thou now my whole Strength, as thou art my only Hope. Make such lively Impressions in my Heart and Mind, that the Remembrance of the Stripes which the Divine Pastor of my Soul has received

on

on thee, and the mortal Pains he suffer'd
for the Sake of my Salvation, may engage
2 Cor. xii. me to thank and glorify him in mine, by
Patience, Submission and Courage, which I
beseech him to grant me.

A R T I C L E II.

*The Christian comforted in his Sickness,
by beholding Jesus on the Cross, as the
Lamb of God sacrificed for our Sins.*

O my Jesus, only Object of the Adora-
tion of Angels and Men, seeing thou art the
Creator of all things, I confess and acknow-
ledge thee upon this Cross as the Man-God,
who by the Humiliations, Sufferings and
Death on it, renderest the Divine Majesty
the Homage and Adoration which I have but
too long refused to give it. Holding from
his paternal and all-powerful Goodness, the
Essence and Life of my Soul and Body, I
ought to make them subservient to his Glory,
and consecrate them to his Service by an
humble Devotion, and intire Fidelity to his
Orders: And yet thro' a monstrous Ingrati-
tude, thro' an incomprehensible Infidelity
and Rebellion, I imploy'd against God the
Gifts which I had received from himself, I
refused him the most reasonable and just Obe-
dience, and have sacrificed to the Devil, who
is the Enemy of his Glory and my Salvation.

Deut.
xxxii.

Penetrated, O my Jesus, with the Insults
done to the Majesty of thy Father, thou
consentedst to repair it by the Ignominies of
the

the Cross, and bloody Outrages of thy Passion: Not content to acknowledge and adore the Sovereign Grandeur of God by the ineffable Mystery of thy Abasement, thou wouldst render him all the Homage he deserves, by the Loss of thy own Life; thou hast delivered thyself to Death, as the Victim that could alone be agreeable in his Sight; the Sacrifice of perfect Obedience which thou renderedst to thy Father from thy coming into the World, influenced all thy Actions; thou soughtest only his Glory, in sacrificing and consuming thyself, by the most rigorous Penance, painful Labours, and dolorous Death.

*Ephes. v.
2.*

But, my Jesus, thou hast look'd on my Salvation as contributing to the Glory and fulfilling the Will of thy Father, since by the same Oblation thou madest him of thy Person to obey his Orders, thou sanctifiedst and reinstatedst me in his Favour; seeing that in the same Sacrifice of thyself which thou hast offered to his holy Majesty, thou hast taken the Title of my Saviour, by freeing me from the Bondage of Sin.

Tertul.

The Glory of God and my Salvation were, all the Moments of thy Life, the two only Objects of thy Thoughts, Desires, Humiliations and Sufferings: Thou hast always look'd upon thyself as a Victim offered to the Omnipotence and Justice of thy Father; the Ardour of thy Love for him and Man, render'd thee a perpetual Holocaust in his Sight; thou offeredst thyself on the Altar of thy Heart, before thou didst it on thy Cross; thou hadst it aways present to thy Mind,

*St. Aug.
Tract. xiii.
in Joan.*

*St. Greg.
Naz.
Orat. xxii.*

thou

thou often madest it the Subject of thy Entertainments with thy Apostles; thy frequent
Mat. xx. Journeys to *Jerusalem*, where thou wert to suffer a bloody Death, kindled in thee, the ardent Desires to see it consummated; the Effusion of thy Blood alone capable to restore me to the Life of Grace, which I had lost, was that salutary Baptism which thou incessantly wishedst for.

2 Cor. v. Become then, my Soul, a new Creature
 17. in Jesus Christ, regenerated in his Wounds, plunged and buried in the Life-giving Bath he prepared for thee on the Cross, dead to the World, begotten to God by Baptism, consecrated to his Service by the most solemn Vows, thou oughtst to continually immolate thyself to his supreme Majesty, in Imitation of Jesus Christ thy Master and Model; thou

Rom. vi. oughtst to direct to his Honour and Glory all the Thoughts of thy Mind, and Affections of thy Heart; to make that mystical Incense of Prayer, so agreeable in his Sight, to incessantly ascend before his Throne by the Fervency of thy Love; to faithfully acquit thyself of all the Duties, which Religion prescribes thee; to live in a perfect Dependence and Submission to his Orders; to

Colloss. iii. put of the old Man which remains in us, by subjecting to his Law the Passions and Motions of thy Heart; to mortify thy Senses by the Austerities of Penance, in a word, thou oughtst to make a continual Sacrifice of thyself to God, in Acknowledgment of his sovereign Power that created thee, and the
St. Aug. Excess of his Love that redeemed thee.
Lib. x. de Civit, &c.

Behold

Behold, my Soul, the Debt thou hadst contracted with the Lord, in order to correspond with the Graces his Mercy had prevented thee with. Such were thy Duties in Quality of Disciple of Jesus crucified and dead for thee; such was the reasonable and Christian Worship, which he had recommended to thee by his Apostle, and which thou oughtst to render him all the Days of thy Life; such was the Alliance thou hadst contracted with him in Baptism, and wherein thou oughtst to have remain'd stedfast till Death: Yet with what Fidelity hast thou acquitted thyself of these so just and essential Obligations? Alas! far from not living but for God, and addressing thy Prayers to him, thou hast not lived but for the World, which thou madest the only Object of thy Vows; far from being submissive to the holy Laws of the Creator, and from looking upon, as Idolatry, whatever diverts us from his Worship and Love, thou hast betrayed thy Faith and Promises; in following only the inordinate Love of Creatures, always opposite to the Sentiments and Documents of thy Saviour; far from dying to thyself, in order to live but for Jesus Christ, who restored thee to his Inheritance at the Price of his Blood, thou hast stript him of this Right, and robbed him of the Fruit of his Sufferings and Death, by following the Bent of thy unbridled Passions; far from preserving the Spirit of Jesus Christ thou hadst received in Baptism, which is a Spirit of Humiliation, Penance, Poverty, Retreat and Separation

*Rem. viii.**Prov. iii.**St. Aug.*

Rom. vi.
19.

Isa. xlv.

ration from the World, thou livedst according to the Spirit of this prophane Age, always Enemy to thy Saviour and his Doctrine; far from esteeming thyself happy to enjoy the Liberty of the Children of God, thou chosedst rather the Servitude of Sin, to which thou, but too often, madest thyself a Slave; far from making all the Faculties of thy Soul and Body subservient to the Glory of this Divine Master, thou hast employed them to kindle and foment within thyself different Passions, to which, as so many Idols of thy own making, thou paidst an unjust and criminal Obedience.

Ah! upon how many Occasions hast thou made appear thy Indifference or Disgust to the holy Practices of Religion, I mean the assisting at Divine Service, publick Instructions of the Church, and reading of pious Books, which are so many Means to obtain the Graces necessary to lead and unite thee to God? How often hast thou neglected to assist or visit thy Neighbour in Sicknes, under the specious Pretext of a bad or indifferent State of Health, when thou madest it appear to the contrary, in pursuing thy Interest and following the Pleasures which this deceitful World presented thee? How often hast thou said (at least by thy Actions) that the Days past in Divertisements and prophane Conversation, are much more agreeable than those we pass at Church, under the Eyes of God, in the holy Exercise of Prayer? And was not this, my Soul, to be ashamed of the Cross of Christ and his Religion? Often
convinced

convinced by his Grace of the Obligation thou art under of devoting thyself to his Service, hast thou not used Tergiversations and Shifts to excuse thyself from it? Hast thou not always indeavoured to give him as little as possible, when he had been so profuse in Favour of thee, so far as to sacrifice even his very Life for thy Salvation? *St. Bern.*

Revolve then, my Soul, in the Bitterness of thy Heart and in the Presence of Jesus offer'd for thee on this Cross, the many Years thou hast pass'd in Independence to God and his holy Law, in the Neglect of his Service, Abuse of his Graces and Contempt of his Word and Example; ask of this merciful Saviour, the Groans, Sighs and Tears, necessary to deplore the unjust Preference thou hast made of the World to him, in consecrating to it a Heart of which God was so jealous, having not framed and prevented it by so many Graces but for himself. *Rom. vi. 21. Jerem. xvii.*

Ah! ungrateful and unfaithful Heart, be not ashamed to confess the Aversion thou hast had to the Yoke and Cross of thy Saviour, the Disgust thou hast shewn for the Mortifications he imposed upon thee, for that Self-renunciation and mystical Death which he order'd thee to undergo. What! ought I to say to myself, sighing with Compunction and Sorrow: Why did Jesus Christ upon the Cross honour his holy Church with the Title of his Spouse, but to the end that the Children, regenerated of her by Baptism, should make it their Duty to partake of the Sufferings of her Divine Spouse? To what end did *Isa. i. 3.*

Gal. iii.

2 Cor. v.

St. Pet.

Chryf.

Serm.

cxxxviii.

St. Aug.

did the Priest make on my Forehead the Sign of the Cross of Christ in Baptism, but that I should glory in being the Disciple of this Divine Master, by a Conformity of my Conduct to his? Why did he require of me such solemn Promises to renounce the World and myself, before he anointed me with the holy Oyl of the Catechumens, but to make me remember, that the first Step to Christianity is an Engagement to incessantly resist, thro' the Assistance of God's Grace, the inordinate Desires of the Flesh? To what end did the holy Church continually expose to my Eyes the Cross of Jesus, but to give me to understand that it would be ill acknowledging the Death of a God made Man, to die but once for him, and to ingage me, in Consideration of that Death he suffer'd for us, to sacrifice my Life to him, daily die to the World, to Sin, to myself, and to be sensible of nothing but what regards the Glory and Honour of a God, humbled, abused, and dead for my Salvation? Why does this same Church so often declare in her Instructions the Necessity of Penance, but to teach us that the Divine Justice wills that we should not only adore a God dead on a Cross, but that we should likewise die with him, by the Labours of a Penitential Life, in order to partake hereafter of the Glory he merited for us upon it? Infine, why did this Divine Saviour order his Church to renew every Day on the Altar the Memory of the grand Sacrifice of the Cross, but to ingage thee, in often assisting at it, not only to lament the Crimes which have

have been the Cause of his Death on *Mount-Calvary*, but also to immolate thyself to the Divine Majesty, after his Example, by the Destruction of all thy inordinate Affection to Creatures, and prepare, by the mystical Oblation of thyself, for that grand Sacrifice, which thou art to offer him at Death by the total Dissolution of thy Being?

Once more, my Soul, cease not to lament and reproach thyself with thy Ingratitude and Infidelities; seek for the Pardon of them in the Wounds of thy Saviour; beg of him to drown them in the Blood he so abundantly shed for thee on the Cross; protest to him that being sincerely desirous to redeem the Time thou hast mispent, thou art willing to begin now this Oblation of thyself, owing to him by so many just Titles; by consenting that thy Body should be sacrificed by the Pains of Sickness, and Anguish of Death, in order to appease his Wrath and draw his Mercy on thee. Num. ix.

Penetrated, O my Jesus, with the deepest Sorrow for having refused to acknowledge and adore thy sovereign Dominion over my Health and Life, by an intire Devotion to thy Will, in Satisfaction for my Sins I submit to the rigorous Sentence of the Sickness and Death thou pronouncest against me; I shall for the future look on my Bed as an Altar of Penance, to offer thee thereon the daily Sacrifice of my Sufferings. Dan. iii. 39.

I join, O my Jesus, this Oblation of myself to that which thou hast offer'd for me on the Cross: Grant me Grace to fulfil in

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myself

myself what is wanting in me to thy Passion, that I may apply the Merit of it to myself here, by a Communication with thy Sufferings, and receive the Reward of it hereafter; give me as much Love for Sufferings as I hitherto have had Hatred and Aversion to them; may I no more complain that thou gradually untie the Chain that links me to the Earth, in order to see it broke with less Pain at the Hour of my Death; make me receive my Sufferings and Death as the last Stroke of thy Justice upon me, and as a Means thy Mercy uses to join me to thee; inspire me with Courage to raise myself above Nature, in order to look upon, as advantagious to me, the Dissolution of this Body, under the Frailty of which I daily succumb, seeing it will serve for the Expiation of my Faults, and be a Translation from this perishable Life, to an eternal Life which I beg thee to grant me.

St. Aug. in
Ps. xxxvi.

A R T I C L E III.

The Christian in Sickness finds in Jesus Christ crucified the Model of true Wisdom.

O my Jesus, Divine Word, Eternal Wisdom, Author of Truth, who hast cloathed thyself with my passible and mortal Nature, in order to restore me by thy suffering Life and painful Death, to the Life of Grace and Glory I had lost by Sin: Possessing in thyself the Plenitude of God's Spirit, which

John x.
Coloss. ii.

which is a Spirit of Counsel and Wisdom, thou hast made use of the most proper and effectual Means to make me enter into the ways of Salvation, from which I had strayed, and deliver me from the Tyranny of the Devil, to whom I had been an unhappy Victim. *2 Cor. v.*

For, O my Jesus, what a Subject of Humiliation it is to my Pride, to see thee abase thyself so far as to assume the Form of a Slave and a Sinner? What an Incitement to me to destroy in myself that Spirit of Independence and Rebellion, to behold thee render thyself obedient even to the Death of the Cross? Could there be a stronger Motive for me to wean my Heart from the Pleasures of Sense, than to consider thee condemn thyself to the most cruel Pains for my Sake. Could there be a greater Inducement to me to detach myself from the World and its deceitful Comforts than to see thee born and die intirely destitute of all things? *Philip. ii. St. Greg. Job ii. 2 Cor. viii.*

O Master-Piece of the Divine Wisdom! O Mystery of the Cross, to which I had been so long an Enemy, what hast thou not done in Favour of me? Thou hast, by the Virtue of this salutary Wood, triumph'd over the Devil, and redeemed me from his tyrannical Power, deliver'd me from the Jaws of Death and Hell, broke the Chains of my cruel Captivity, annull'd the Sentence of everlasting Death pronounced against me, by fixing it to thy Cross; paying thereon to thy Father, what I owed to his Justice, thou hast reconciled me to him, and sealed my

Peace with thy own Blood ; in a word, it was on thy Cross, O my Jesus, thou repairedst the dire Effects of Sin, and procuredst me the sure Means to avoid it hereafter.

1 Cor. i.

But, my Soul, this Divine Saviour who became the Source of our Justice and Cause of our Redemption by his Death, is likewise made unto us Wisdom upon the Cross ; that is to say, the Means he used to operate the grand Work of thy Salvation ought to be a Rule to thy Conduct in effecting it. All the Saints, to whom Jesus Christ communicated as to thee his holy Spirit, look'd upon this Wisdom of the Cross, as the principal Object of their Meditations and Inquiry ; all other Knowledge but that of Jesus crucified, and dead for them, seemed unprofitable or

1 Cor. ii.

dangerous to them : All our Study, said they, shall only be to know the different Evils he suffer'd in order to cure the Sores of our Souls, and make an Antidote of them against the mortal Wounds the Enemy of our Salvation endeavours to give us.

Philip. iii.

It is by studying the Wisdom of the Cross, that we discover the Nothingness of the Grandeurs of the World, the Vanity of its Comforts, the Falshood and Poison of its Pleasures ; it is in meditating on a God humbled, poor, abased, despised, suffering and dying for us on a Cross, that we excite ourselves to the Practice of those Virtues, of which

St. Aug. in

Pf. xxxiv.

he has given us the Example ! What ! Say they, we glory to be the Children and Disciples of the Cross, and should we refuse to crucify

crucify our Flesh and its Lusts? What! we believe that our Salvation is the Work of the Sufferings, and Price of the Death of our Saviour, and shall we refuse to suffer and die in order to partake of so great a Benefit? What! we believe that the Cross of Christ, *St. Chrys.* exclusive of ours, is fruitless and ineffectual to us, and shall we refuse to make it fruitful and salutary to us, by the Acceptance of the Evils that make us conformable to this charitable Saviour; apply to ourselves the Merit of his Sufferings, and consummate in us this so great and happy a Work? What! we know that the Kingdom of Jesus Christ is not of *St. Bern.* this World, and in daily asking him to be Heirs of it after Death, shall not we accept of the dolorous Means, which he himself imbraced, in order to procure us the Possession of it? No, no, concluded they, we are not willing to know Jesus Christ by a simple Speculation, nor adore him by a Worship purely exterior, but we will shew, by an effective Imitation of his Sufferings, by a *Philip. iii.* true Crucifixion of ourselves, by a Conformity of our Life and Death with his, how sincerely we love him. We are willing, in order to join our Actions to our Faith, to carry imprinted in our Bodies the dolorous Marks of our Saviour Jesus Christ, because we look upon them as the glorious Trophies of his Victory over Sin, and a Pledge of our eternal Salvation: let Worldlings treat us as Fools for having so much Horror for their Pleasures, and so great a Taste for Penance; they look'd on the Cross of our Saviour as *St. Paulin.*

Folly, and we are willing, after his Example, to be Fools in their Eyes.

Sep. iii. O my Jesus, when I think of this Wisdom and the Conduct of thy Saints and Imitators, which I myself look'd upon as Folly in the Days of my Strength and Health, I acknowledge my Blindness, and am ashamed of my Extravagance. Yes, I own to my Confusion, that I did not think Man happy on Earth, but in as much as he enjoy'd the Comforts and tasted the Pleasures of it; I
Job xxxii. confess that I limited my Devotion to some external Marks of Veneration for the Cross of my Saviour, that I sometimes pray'd him to make me partake of the Merits of his Sufferings; but always refused to take a Share in them with him. I look'd upon it as a
1 Cor. i. kind of Folly, to be willing to suffer, when one can exempt himself from it. I hitherto gave all my Attention and Care, to avoid every thing that could mortify my slothful and sensual Nature, which made me always shun the Houses of the Poor and Sick, fearing lest I should partake of their Sufferings, in being Witness of them, which furnish'd me often with feeble Pretexes to dispense with the holy Law of the Church in regard of Fasting and Abstinence, so proper to curb that Concupiscence that inclines us to the Earth, those Allurements of a rebellious Flesh that lay a thousand Snares for us, expose us to so many Temptations, seduce us so many ways, and so frequently alarm us; so proper to keep our Body in Subjection, that the Mind may be free to contemplate
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on God and pray him to replenish our Hearts with his celestial Gifts. I generally trembled and grew pale at the Sight of Sufferings and Crosses; I beheld with Horror the Mortifications they practise, who live according to the Spirit of Christianity, and whom the Hopes of a happier Life prompts to do themselves that Violence so recommended by the Gospel; I look'd on all those holy Persons as weak in Mind, who renouncing for Jesus Christ's Sake the Advantages of this World, shut themselves up in the most austere Cloysters, condemn themselves for Life to the most severe Penance, and make it their Glory to be marked with the precious Characteristic of the Cross.

St. *Igna.*
Martyr.

St. *Bern.*

Once more, O Lord, I am ashamed of my Extravagance; I confess, that in thinking and talking in that manner, I hearken'd to neither my Reason nor Religion; that I refused to consult the very Principles of good Sense and of Faith, since, if Reason inspires a Man with the Desire of being happy, Religion shews him no true and solid Happiness, but in the Knowledge and Possession of God; and seeing Jesus Christ, who is the Author of Truth and Wisdom itself, has used no surer Means to procure to Man this happy and eternal Possession of God, than to humble and abase himself even to the Death of the Cross; it is therefore an Illusion and Folly to believe there is any other way for thee to go to Heaven, but that which this Divine Saviour traced out for thee.

Idem.

Bern.

Serm.

xxxvii.

St. *Aug. in*

Pf. xxxvi.

1 Cor. iii. Ah! how far am I, O my Jesus, from loving to partake of the Scorn and seeming Folly of thy Cross, which notwithstanding is the Principle of true Wisdom, and Source of solid Grandeur: As I was not willing to die to the World, I took a special Care not to appear foolish in its Eyes; and as I loved but its false Glory, I sought only its Wisdom, which is but Folly in thy Sight.

St. Amb. Pardon me, O my Jesus, for having so long follow'd the Illusions of my Senses and Passions; to have hitherto sought to seduce and deceive myself: What Obligations do I owe thee that thou hast not abandoned me, till Death, to a voluntary and a criminal Blindness. What should I have reap'd then but my Reprobation and Loss, seeing that without thy Mercy and Grace I should have sown, during my Life, according to the Flesh and its inordinate Desires?

Gal. vi. I adore, O my Jesus, the Designs of Salvation which thy Goodness has still on me, in visiting me with Infirmary and Sickness, I look upon it as a Means which thy merciful Wisdom uses to open my Eyes on the Irregularity of my past Conduct, in order to destroy in me those fatal Passions I so long followed, and make me to love the Christian Virtues I neglected to practise.

St. Greg. Mag. I receive this Sickness as the Chastisements and Pain due to my Sins; grant, O my Jesus, that, by the Assistance of thy Grace, it may likewise be a preservative against it for the future. Cast, I beseech thee, thy Eyes on the painful and humble Condition which

I am in, and as thy Wisdom reduced me to it, let thy Grace accompany and remain in *Eccl. iv.* me in order to discover to me the great Good which the Sufferings of the Body procure to a Christian Soul; to give me hopes that in delivering over my Flesh, this sinful *1 Cor. v.* Flesh, to Tribulations and Afflictions, it is in View of saving my Soul in the Day of thy Vengeance; that in making me feel the Weight of thy Anger in time, it is to make me feel the Effects of thy Clemency for *Pf. lix.* Eternity; that in burning my Intrails by the Heat of this Furnace, it is to make me avoid the terrible Fire of Hell, to give me to understand that in humbling in me the exterior Man by the Stripes with which thou strikest it, and in making me remember by this wholesome Discipline the Nothingness of my Origin and approaching End, I ought to humble my Heart and Mind in thy Presence; to let me know, that in refusing the Sight and Presence of Company, which Sickness renders troublesome to me, I ought to lament the excessive Love I had for it, and the Aversion I had for Retirement; that being but a Pilgrim on Earth, who ought to walk and *St. Bern.* run continually towards Heaven, I was much in the wrong to seek my Ease, Rest and *Jerem.* Pleasure in it; in a word, to let me know, *xvii. &* that an approaching Death being soon to *Heb. xiii.* snatch me away from all my Substance, I ought to grieve for the bad Use I made of it, and repair it by abundant Alms.

It is thus, my Soul, that Jesus crucified *Pf. xv.* discovers to thee the Secrets of the Divine

Wisdom so necessary for a Suffering and sick Christian; it is but the Worldling, who accounting the Cross as Folly, as he looks upon Religion as a Fable and Chimera, is ignorant of the great Advantages accruing from the Tribulations and Sufferings of this Life. Cease not then to thank this Jesus for his Assistance and Lights; imbrace heartily his Cross, seeing it's the true way to Salvation, wherein thou oughtst incessantly to walk.

O Divine Jesus, Wisdom of the eternal Father, accomplish in me, at the Expence of my Health and Life, the important Work of my Salvation, which thou hast operated on the Cross; inspire me on this Bed of Sorrow with the same Detachment thou hadst from this World; imprint in me the Marks of Conformity and Resemblance I ought to bear with thee, becoming on the Cross the Pledge of my Salvation with thy Father, and the Source of all the Graces I expect from his Bounty; reconcile me so with him, that eternal Bliss may be my Doom.

O my Saviour, Miracle and Prodigy of the Wisdom of God, it's thro' the Merits of thy Cross, I was deliver'd from the Devil, and restor'd to God my Creator and Father; remain with me until thou givest me up into his paternal Hands: Thou knowest that it is but in thee, and thro' thee I can be secure from the Violence of my Enemies who seek my Perdition; suffer me to oppose thy Protection to their Efforts; let thy Cross be continually ingraven on my Forehead and in my Heart, to the end that under the Ban-

ner and Protection of this Sign formidable to the Powers of Hell, I may have the Steadfastness and Courage necessary to sustain the Conflicts I am to undergo, and come off Victorious: Banish from my Heart all Temptations of Dispair at the Sight of the Multitude of my Sins, which the Devil will often represent to it, and put me continually in Mind of thy superabundant Redemption, and infinite Mercies. *St. Aug. St. Bern. Serm. lxi. in Cant.*

ARTICLE IV.

The Christian in Sickneſs leans on Jeſus crucified as on the corner Stone of the Edifice of his Salvation.

O my Jeſus, Author and Supporter of my Faith, I acknowledge and adore thee on the Croſs for the Foundation, Support and Perfection of the ſpiritual Edifice of my Salvation; thou art the fundamental and corner Stone of the holy Church, into the Building of which thou haſt made me enter by *2 Paral. Baptiſm.* It's by the Graces I therein received, thou madeſt me a living Stone of this *Ephes. ii.* Houſe conſecrated to God, ſo agreeable in *22.* his Sight, ſo honour'd with his Attention, ſo loaded with his Favours. But, my Jeſus, what Humiliations, what Labours, what Fatigues and Pains haſt thou not undergone, to make of my Heart a Temple worthy the Divine Majeſty? After having begun it by the ſtupendous Abaſement of thy Incarnation, and continued it by the Cares and *Iſa. xxviii.* Sweats.

Sweats of a painful and laborious Life, thou hast finished it on the Cross by a cruel and bloody Death. Thou hast built on a Rock thy Church of which I have the Happiness to be a Member, cemented with thy precious Blood the living Stones which compose this mystical Edifice; taken off, thro' the Merits of the numberless Stripes thou receivedst from the Hand of thy Father, the Flaws and Deformity of them, and continuest daily to augment and support this Edifice by the Grace of thy holy Spirit.

*St. Bern.
de Lib.
Arbit.*

Now, my Soul, become by Baptism a Part of the House of God, built and raised by Jesus Christ on the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, thou oughtst as a living and reasonable Stone, supported by his Grace, to be a Coadjutor to this Divine Architect; and in order to mark out to thee the Part he gives thee in the Building of this august Edifice, not as a simple Instrument, but as a rational and free Agent, thou shouldst endeavour not only to edify the Members of it by the Sanctity of thy Life and Manners, but daily to occupy thyself in increasing the Grace of Jesus Christ in thy Soul, by a faithful Co-operation with it, and a constant Obedience to the Divine Law; by practising on thyself that rigorous Penance which a Father of the Church calls the Destruction of Vice, Preparation of Virtue, Confusion of the Devils and Joy of Angels.

*St. Leo.
Serm. v.*

*B. Alanus
de Rupe.*

Thus, my Soul, having enter'd into the Structure of the mystical Edifice of the Church, thou oughtst to daily adorn it with all

all manner of virtuous and holy Actions; called by Jesus Christ to fill in the celestial *Jerusalem* the Places render'd vacant by the Pride of the fallen Angels, thou oughtst, by the Assistance of his Grace, to raise thyself to that Perfection, requisite for those living Stones which compose the holy *Sion*; making part of the Church Militant on Earth, thou oughtst to expect to be daily try'd and struck, by the Hammer of Tribulation and Penance.. *St. Amb.*

It is not in the celestial *Jerusalem* that the Strokes of this Hammer are felt, or the Noise of it heard, since a profound and perfect Peace reigns there, being a Place of Rest, Reward and Glory; but it is here below that the Stones are cut, and the precious Wood wrought, which are one Day to enter into the Structure of the heavenly *Sion*, *in Luc.*
St. Greg. Mag. Lib. xxxiv. c.
 It is true one must have great Courage and *x.*

a firm Resolution to apply himself to this painful Work, and patiently bear the Labours of it. But what has not Jesus Christ suffer'd in his own Person, in that of his Apostles, Martyrs, and all the Saints, who have labour'd after him and with him in this important Work? What does he not likewise suffer every Day in the living Members of his Church, who join with him in his Labours, and to whom he gives the Strength, Courage and Resolution necessary for so considerable an Enterprize. *St. Thom. Aq.*

O slothful Soul, Enemy to the Labour so requisite for Salvation, thou hast often refused to put thy Hand to the Work of God, which is also thine; thou hast been dishearten'd

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at the very Thoughts of the Fatigues inseparable from its Execution, whilst thou hast taken so much Pains to erect in thy Heart

2 Esdr. iv. as many Altars as Passions and unlawful Desires to which thou hast given way.

What oughtst thou not to fear, that having made such bad Use of thy Health; spent the finest Days of thy Life, in Opposition to the Designs and Will of God; so little benefitted by the Lessons and Examples of thy Saviour; render'd his Labours and Pains ineffectual to thyself; shewn so much Aversion to his Poverty, Humiliations and Sufferings, which nevertheless are indispensably required to build the Edifice of Salvation; in a word, after having scandalized the Church, and struck as it were, so often in thy Life, against that firm and unshaken Rock, on which Baptism had placed thee, oughtst thou not to fear, I say, lest thou shouldst suffer Shipwreck at the Hour of thy Death? Didst thou not deserve to feel the Indignation of a God, whose Mercies thou hast so long abused? Didst thou not merit to be excluded from the House to which he had given thee a Right of Inheritance, after having so often rejected his Grace from thy Heart, which God had chosen and consecrated for his Temple and Habitation.

Ah! my Soul, cease not to lament for having so often prophan'd, and so long made it the Habitation of Sin; to have so frequently made the Members of thy Body, which the Holy Ghost had sanctified by his Grace, subservient to Iniquity; thank the Bounty of thy

Cap. iii.
v. 5.

Luke ii.

Exod. xxii.

Rom. vi.

thy Saviour, that thou hast not perished without Resource in so sinful a State. Receive, as one of the greatest Proofs of his Mercies, the Chastisement to which he condemns thee; humbly kiss the Hand that lays such salutary Stripes on thee; beseech him, whilst he corrects thee in this Life, that thou mayst receive the Consolation to be spared by him in the next: Cast thy Eyes on his Cross in the Violence of thy Pains; and seeing Jesus suffering and dying for thy Salvation, address this Prayer to him, with Sentiments of Acknowledgment, Humility and Confidence. *John. c. ii.*

It is true, O Lord, I don't deserve to be admitted into thy Kingdom at my Death, because I so often prophan'd and render'd ineffectual thy Grace in my Heart; nevertheless, the Consideration of the infinite Evils, thou hast suffer'd to obtain Mercy for me, raises my Confidence and makes me hope, that, far from rejecting me from thy Sight, *Isa. lvi.* thou wilt introduce me into thy holy Temple where I shall for ever offer a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving and Praise.

It is true, O my Jesus, that in order to execute this Design so favourable to me, thou destroyest this earthly Habitation where my Soul resides; it is true, thou overfettest my Body by Sickness, strikest and breakest it by the Stripes of Tribulation and Pains: But when I consider that thine has been struck even to Death, by the Hand of thy Father, and broke by the most cruel Torments; when I consider that thy Father did not raise thee in Heaven, to be the Head of the glorious

rious and triumphant Church, but after having humbled and abased thee, even to the Death of the Cross, to be the Foundation and Head of the Militant Church on Earth:

St. Aug. How happy am I, ought I to cry out, to partake of thy Humiliations and Sufferings, in order to be reunited to thee, O Saviour of my Soul, and become a living Member of thy Triumphant Church in Heaven! How happy am I, that the Punishment due to my Crimes are changed, by the Virtue of thy Cross, into a Sacrifice for my Sins! Yes, I believe that the Evils, which I so justly suffer as a Criminal, will promote the Glory of

St. Aug. God, and be profitable to my Salvation, if
Lib. xl. de I bear them in View, and for the Love of
Civit. my Jesus, who, tho' Just and Innocent, underwent much greater Pains than mine. How much I regret to have always render'd such whollome Chastisements unprofitable, to have hitherto so little benefited by the Tribulations and Pains which thy merciful Justice

Jerem. c. sent me, in order to make me leave these
ii. & v. unjust Ways, which a good State of Health, and an easy Situation made me in Love with. I lament, O my God, for having so often abused the Remedies which thy Bounty presented to me, in order to cure the Wounds of my Soul; and sought her Death thro' my Impatience and Murmurings, where I should have found her Life and Salvation.

St. Bern. Look upon this Sickness as a new Pledge of thy Tenderneſs, and an Effect of thy Mercy in Favour of me; permit me not then, O my Jesus, to contradict the Dispositions

sitions and Orders of thy Providence, be *Job vi. &*
 they ever so rigorous, nor to push back thy *St. Aug.*
 Hand, be the Cup it presents me ever so *in Ps.*
 bitter; but give me Courage to drink it with
 Submission, and to receive in my Body, tho'
 infeebled by so much Misery, all the Stripes
 that may imprint in me the Image of thy
 Sufferings, and make thy Love always to
 reign in my Heart: Grant, by thy Grace,
 that the painful and humble Condition to *St. Hier.*
 which thou reducest me, may raise me to
 the charming and delightful Tabernacles
 which thou inhabitest.

Thou hast said, O my Jesus, that when *John xii.*
 thou shouldst be raised on the Cross, thou
 wouldst draw all Men unto thee; execute
 thy Promise with regard to me; break, by
 the secret Virtue of that adorable Wood,
 the Bands which tie me still to the Earth,
 change my Affections and Desires; disen-
 gage my Heart from the Love of this pre-
 sent Life, by remembring the Contempt thou
 hadst for it; give me Strength to resist the
 Allurements of this perishable World, in
 order to follow thee alone by Tribulations
 and Sufferings: The Servant is not greater
 than his Master; and since it has cost thee
 so much to open Heaven for me, would it
 be reasonable in me to ask thee Admittance
 into it, without being willing to suffer? *St. Aug.*

Humble then thyself, my Soul, under the
 powerful Hand of this Master, always ado-
 rable and full of Goodness, seeing he abases
 thee at present under the Stripes of Tribu-
 lation, in order to make thee the Compa-
 nion

2 Macb.
xiv.

St. Aug.

nion of his Death, Elevation and Glory. Behold often the Cross of thy amiable Saviour, and in considering his Dolors by what thou feelest in thyself, say, O Crosses! O Pains! O Sufferings! I receive and embrace you with all my Heart: May the Grace of my Saviour for ever preserve me from profaning this same Heart which you have, I hope, been the Occasion of purifying and rendering the Habitation of the Holy Ghost; may the Merits of my Redeemer make me, in departing this World, to enter into the Structure of the celestial *Sion*, the Church Triumphant, of whom my Jesus is the Head, as he is that of the Church Militant, of which I have the Honour to be a Member.

ARTICLE V.

The Christian in Sickness happily confounded, by considering the infinite Difference between his Sufferings and those of Jesus on the Cross.

Ephes. i.
18.

Isa. liii.

NOW, O my Jesus, I beseech thee to enlighten my Mind, and grant me a docile Heart to see and confess thee the all-powerful and immortal God, thro' the numberless Wounds, which cover, disfigure, and hide in thee that Splendor of Majesty and Grandeur, of which the Prophets so often make mention, in order to animate me in my Pains to the Practice of the Virtues thou hast practised in thine. Illuminate my Soul to acknowledge, that amidst the Abasements, Humiliations,

miliations, and incomprehensible Sufferings of the Cross, thou art the Light of Nations, the Master and Teacher of Men, the sovereign Judge of Life and Death, the Wisdom and Virtue of God himself; speak to my Heart sorrowful and dejected by the Weight of Tribulation; inspire it, in the suffering Condition it is in, with the Sentiments thou hadst in thy Passion. Make me partake on this Bed of Sorrow of that perfect Submission thou shewedst thy Father thro' the whole Course of thy painful Life; grant me a little of that Patience and Courage, which appear'd in thee amidst the Horrors of the most cruel Death. *Ecc. xvi.*

O my Jesus, thou saidst to me from the Cross, in order to make me ashamed of my Cowardise, and animate me to Patience: Behold, consider, examine, the Evils I suffer for thee, see what it costs me to break the Chains of thy Captivity, to restore thee to the Liberty of the Children of God, and re-establish thee in the Right of the Inheritance of my Father. Examine if ever there were any Sufferings like unto mine; make a parallel of the Pains thou so justly sufferest, with those I endured out of a pure Motive of Love for thee. *Heb. xii.*

O my Jesus, when I represent to myself the Portraiture of thy Life, which was but Pains, Persecutions and Crosses; when I compare the Torrent of the Bitterness of thy Cup, with the little Share thou givest me of it; when I reflect on the Greatness of thy Sufferings in regard of mine, I am ashamed
of

- of my Effeminacy, I reproach myself with Cowardise, and beg Pardon of thee for my
- Matth. ii.* Impatience. Persecuted from thy Cradle, destitute of all Succour necessary for the Support of Life, having neither House, nor Home
- Mat. viii.* to retire to; exposed to the most pressing Necessities; disown'd, rejected, hated, and look'd upon as a Man unworthy to live, by these very People whom thou charmedst by thy Discourses, edifiedst by thy Examples and loadest with thy Benefits; what Snares did they not lay for thee? What outrageous Words, what Blasphemies did they not pronounce against thy holy Conduct and adorable Person? How often did they impute to thee as a Crime, the curing the Sick and doing Works of Mercy in their Favour? How many Accusations did they form against thy wholesome Doctrine, treating it as pernicious to Religion and the State? How many Councils did they hold to destroy thee? How often did they come in a tumultuous Manner, with a Design to stone thee? Thou didst not succumb, O my Jesus, amidst so many Dangers, because the Hour of the World's Redemption was not as yet come; because thou wouldst give me more pregnant Proofs of thy Love, in chusing to redeem me by the shameful Death of the Cross; because thou wouldst feel in thyself the Weight and Violence of all manner of Evils, in order to sanctify ours, and teach us to bear them as thou didst, with Patience, Meekness and Courage. But the Moment decreed in Heaven for the Redemption of the World
- was

was no sooner come, than thou didst of thy own accord hasten to that Death, which was to be the Purchase of it; thou presentedst thyself to thy Persecutors; thou even walkedst before them, and preventedst their Violence; so great was the Ardency of thy Love for my Salvation. This impious Multitude loaded thee with Chains, carried thee before the Tribunal of Judges, who were thy declared Enemies, where the most avow'd Hatred, Fury and Revenge presided: There thou wert injured and reviled by the Servants of those iniquitous and sacrilegious Judges, becamest the Object of their most biting Railleries, fill'd with Scorns and condemn'd to the infamous Punishment of Flagellation. *John c.*

O my Jesus, I am pierced with a true and sincere Grief, when I consider that it was my Sins which delivered thee up to those inhuman Soldiers, who dragg'd thee before the Tribunals of thy Adversaries, made thee undergo their Judgments full of Impostures, and subjected thee to their unjust and calumnious Sentence; I lament, when I reflect, that my Crimes caused thee to be so cruelly tyed to a Pillar, and that the Measure of my Faults became that of thy Wounds; *Deut. xxv.* when I think that the murdering Strokes, which these Barbarians discharged on thy innocent Flesh, were redoubled according to the Number and Malice of my Iniquities; when I see thy Body fasten'd to a Post, stript of its Garments, all cover'd with Wounds, and the Earth besmeared with thy Blood. I tremble when I behold thy adorable Head crown'd

crown'd with a dolorous Diadem, pierced with and made all over bloody by the Points of the Thorns of which this mock Crown was made.

Matth.
xxvi.

Ah! my Jesus, in beholding thy Face cover'd with Disgrace, tho' I find in it no Remains of that Beauty, which surpass'd that of all the Children of Men, nor see in thy Eyes, or on thy Countenance the resplendent Marks of thy Divinity, which ingaged thy Apostles so quickly to follow thee, and cast down those who came to seize on thee in the Garden of Olives; I acknowledge and confess thee, the Sovereign of the Universe; I adore thy supreme Majesty under this Veil which covers the Splendor of thy Grandeur; I own thy all-divine Majesty, with this weak Reed in thy Hand, and under this Crown which those Profligates put on thy Head to render thee contemptible; I confess and declare thee my King, Master, Deliverer and Judge, altho' they treat and condemn thee as the most unworthy and criminal of Slaves.

St. Hier.

Pf. lxiii.

St. Basil.

But, O my Jesus, hast thou not fully satisfied the Justice of thy Father for our Sins, by the cruel and numberless Stripes thou hast received on thy innocent Flesh? Hast thou not intirely paid, by the Dolors of Flagellation, all our Debts for which thou hast given thyself a Surety at his Tribunal? Hast thou still more Evils to suffer, whilst I am so uneasy and so desirous to be deliver'd of mine that are so light? Ah! my Soul, the Love of Jesus for thee is infinite; he wills to give thee the most sure Proof of thy Deliverance from

St. Prosp.

from eternal Death, by that which he is pleased to suffer on the Cross: Not satisfied with all the Wounds wherewith his adorable Body is cover'd, he will not come out of the *Prætorium*, where he is so unworthily treated, but to be lead to *Mount-Galvary*, which he voluntarily ascends in order there to give up his Life, amidst the Pains of the most cruel and infamous Death. The Love of God to thee, O my Soul, is so great, that not satisfied with the Humiliations of his-only Son, he will have him crushed under the Rigors of Torments; he will not look upon him as the Victim of Propitiation for our Sins, the Seal of our perfect Reconciliation with him, Consummator of our Salvation, but when he shall have been immolated and consumed by the mortal Dolors of the Cross; and the Jews, who make themselves by their Hatred and Envy the Executioners of that Sentence of Death pronounced in Heaven, far from appeasing their Fury at the Sight of Jesus, all covered with the Wounds of Flagellation, will, thro' an unheard of Cruelty, by a consummated Malice and horrible repeated Cries, have him nailed and hanged on the infamous Wood of the Cross, receive the Curse and *Anathema* of all the People, expire thereon between two Profligates, and his Name for ever effaced out of the Memory of Man.

St. Aug.
in Joan.

Idem.

Isa. liii.

Deut. xxi.

Ah! my Soul, in adoring with dread the sovereign Justice of God, that exerts itself with so much Rigor on the innocent Jesus, oughtst thou not often to say to thyself in the

Rom. viii. the Violence of thy Pains : If the heavenly Father has not spared his own Son, the most tender Object of his Complaisance and Love ; if he has condemned him to the Death of the Cross for my Salvation, ought I to complain of the Usage I receive from his Mercy, I, who have so often incurred, by my Crimes, his Indignation and Disgrace ? If my Saviour has been overwhelmed with Dolors and

Luke xxiii. Pains for my Sins, what do I not deserve, and expect to suffer, I, who have wilfully committed them ? If the Devil, who finds nothing in this Man-God that belongs to him, exercises with the last Fury on his sacred Person this Empire of Death, which was given to him only over Sinners ; with what Patience ought I to suffer the Pains of Sickness, in order to testify to Jesus my Gratitude for delivering me, at the Expence of his Life, from the everlasting Death to which I had been condemned ?

Isa. lvii. It plainly appears, my Soul, by thy Aversion to Sickness, and by the Impatience thou shewest in it, that thou castest not thy Eyes on the Cross of Jesus with a little Reflection on the dolorous Mysteries of his Passion and Death ; it evidently appears thou mindest nothing but thy Pains, which thou but too much deservest to suffer, and that thou thinkest not on those of Jesus, who is the Innocent and Just by way of Excellence : In vain does he call thee from off his Cross, in vain does he inspire thee to always have it present to thy Eyes ; far from beholding it with a Reflection on thyself, far from being

being attentive to his salutary and Life-giving Voice, thou bestowest all thy Attention on the good or bad Events of thy Sickness, and Success of the Remedies which thou takest to cure thee; as if this Divine Saviour had condemn'd himself to the Dolors and Death of the Cross, only to make our Salvation consist in an effeminate and carnal Life, which he always condemn'd by his Doctrine and Example; as if the State and Condition of the Church Militant, whereof thou art a Member, was not to continually oppose the Inclinations of corrupt Nature, and incessantly groan under the Weight of the Miseries of our Peregrination. *St. Clem. Alex.*

Ah! since Jesus calls thee to be Partaker of his Sufferings, in bearing them, propose to thyself the Motives he had in bearing his; look upon them as holding no Proportion with the Punishment which thy Sins deserve; receive them, not as Pains inseparable from human Condition, but as Marks of the Love of our God; stifle the Delicacy of Nature, and the Importunities of its Wants, in order to only hearken to the Voice of the Grace of our charitable Saviour, who draws near and unites himself to afflicted Christians, who are his Members and Image; stop thy Complaints, Sighs and Tears, for the suffering Condition to which his Goodness reduces thee, in Hopes of obtaining Heaven, which will soon be the End and Reward of it; acknowledge and publish the Mercies of thy Saviour in his very Justice, by considering thy past Disobedience; return him Thanks
 F that

that he prepares thee, by Degrees, for thy Departure out of this World, by Sufferings so proper to unty the Bands that binds us to it, and make us languish after the Kingdom of Heaven; express often thy Gratitude, that he accommodates himself to thy Weakness, in the Sickness with which he visits thee, suspends sometimes the Violence of its Pains, in order to give Ease to Nature, and animate thy Courage against the fresh Assaults of them; and that he sometimes diversifies them, to diminish their Violence, and increase thy Merit by the Variety of Trials; that he lets thee seek for Assistance from others, and that he comes to visit thee himself, in order to support and console thee by the Grace of the Sacraments, and that which accompanies the Words of his Ministers.

Ecc.
xxxviii.

In considering the infinite Difference that is between thy Sufferings and mine, says the Divine Jesus to thee, think of the total Privation I am in, of the Succours and Consolations thou receivest in thine. Thou sufferest only in some Part of thy Body; but there is not one Part of mine without mortal Wounds; and the Jews, who are Witnesses to it, seek only to irritate them, with a Design to make me perish the sooner: Thy Body fatigued with Pain, lies on a Bed commodious to ease it; mine, all over cover'd with Wounds, exhausted by the numberless Stripes of Flagellation, Crown of Thorns, and ill Usage of the Soldiers, is loaded with a heavy Cross along the Streets of *Jerusalem*; it is afterwards

St. Greg.
M.

Luke xxiii.

afterwards stretched out, fix'd to, and raised
 on that infamous Tree; no other Support
 for the Weight of my bruised Body, but
 large Nails which pierce and tear the Nerves
 of my Hands and Feet. Is there any Pain so
 sensible? Is there any Cruelty greater than
 that of disjoining the Bones of a living Body? *Psalms* xxi.
 And consequently, is there any Affliction and
 Suffering comparable to mine? And amidst
 this Deluge of Evils into which I am willing
 freely to plunge myself, in order to save thee *Jerem.*
 from an everlasting Shipwreck; in the Vio- *viii.*
 lence of the Wounds which the Executi-
 oners multiply on my Body, to cure the
 Wounds of thy Soul, in this State of Suffer-
 ings, incomprehensible to Angels and Men,
 Heaven seems to have no Compassion for
 me; in vain do I raise my Voice to my Fa-
 ther, he abandons me to the Rigor of his *Deut.*
 Justice; he makes me bear the Weight of *xxviii.*
 his Indignation, kindled by the Crimes of
 Mankind; he delivers me over to the Ha-
 tred of the Pharisees, and full Fury of the
 Rage of an exasperated Populace, who takes
 Pleasure in the Evils I suffer, and consents
 to be guilty in the Sight of God, of the Blood
 they see me spill from all the Parts of my
 Body, provided they glut themselves with
 my Pain, and deprive me of my Life; in a
 word, Heaven, the Earth, and Hell, all con-
 spire against me to increase my Pains and
 Sufferings. If the Thirst, caused by their
 Violence, obliges me to tell the Jews that *Psalms* xxi.
 my Tongue, all parched up, sticks to the *& lxxviii.*
 Roof of my Mouth, for a Remedy they

Tertul.

give me Vinegar to drink: Far from complaining of this cruel and unheard of Treatment, I excuse the Authors of it, and beg of my Father to forgive them thro' the Merits of my Blood and Death.

Isaiab 1.

Ah! my Soul, what Trials in the Person of Jesus; but what Courage, Patience and Meekness does he not shew in bearing them? He delivers up his Body to Soldiers, who unmercifully strike and abuse it; he turns not his Face from those who buffet and cover it with Spittle; he threatens not his Enemies, who load him with Injuries and Stripes; he hearkens in Silence to the cruel and unjust Sentence of the Death of the Cross, to which a timorous and impious Judge condemns him; he carries with a good Heart the Instrument of his Punishment; he walks to *Mount-Calvary* with the Meekness of a Lamb, to be there the Victim of the Fury of a Nation which he loves; he mounts with Courage the bloody Altar of his Sacrifice, offers himself on it to God, immolates himself in his Sight, and expires thereon in Peace.

St..Cypr.

Behold, my Soul, the Example and Model thou art to follow in the Trials of Sickness, and that to the Moment of thy Death. It is then the solid Virtue of a Christian becomes known, and that those who are Witnesses of his Sufferings, judge of the Progress he had made before he was seized with it: Sickness is the Touchstone God makes use of to try a Soul, or rather to shew her the little Resemblance and Conformity she has

has with Jesus Christ her Master and Model: Whilst she tastes in Health the Sweetness and Consolations of the Lord's Supper, of *Mount-Thabor*, I would say of the Holy Communion or Meditation; whilst she hears in publick the Ministers of the Lord preach with Success, the Benefits and Advantages of Sufferings, she protests that being so good a Father, and dear a Master, she will for ever follow him, and willingly ascend *Mount-Galvary* with him, because the Participation of his Sufferings makes the Inheritance and Happiness of a Christian on Earth; she inspires the sick Persons, she knows or visits, with these just and pious Sentiments; she animates them to Patience, strengthens and consoles them in their Sufferings: But when God visits her with Infirmitv; when Sickness comes upon her, she forgets the Lessons of Patience and Courage she gave others, she faints away and is convinced of her own Weakness. And such ought thou, my Soul, to acknowledge thyself in the Sight of God with Confusion, Humility and Fear, in seeing thyself so sensible of the least Pains; in shewing so much Dread, Trouble, Impatience and bad Humour, as they increase; in making such Murmurs and Complaints against those who are about thee, in order to assist thee, when they fail in the least thing, when they delay some Minutes in giving thee the Food and Remedies which thou art to take.

Ah! how little thou imitatest the Constancy, Moderation and Meekness of thy Divine Master; how far art thou from suf-

*St. Greg.
Mag. Lib.
xxviii.
Mor. c. 5.*

Thren. iii.

*St. Aug.
in Psalm
lxix.*

1 *Pet.* ii.*Matth.* xiv.*Sap.* xvi.
& xi.

fering with Patience the Outrages of thy Enemies, thou, who shewest so little Submission to the Will of God, who strikes thee in this World, in order to spare thee in the next; how little thou profitest by the precious Moments of Sickneſs, which God ſends thee to bring thee to him, and make thee partake of his moſt ſingular Conſolations, altho' he be treating thee, ſinful and criminal as thou art in his Sight, with the ſame Rigor he treated his only Son, Juſt and Innocent by way of Excellence. He reſuſes him, amidſt the moſt violent Dolors of the Croſs, the Comfort he had ſent him in the Garden by an Angel; he permits that his Apoſtles and Friends ſhould abandon him in this ſorrowful Condition, that they ſhould ſhew by their Flight, as if they had effaced him out of their Heart, and forgot him as a dead Man.

Once more, my Soul, what Difference is between thy Sufferings and thoſe of Jeſus Chriſt? What Difference between the Privation he was in of all Succours and Comfort; and the Readineſs every one about thee ſhews to allay or diminish thy Sufferings, by their Care and comfortable Words? Far from ſeeing all Creatures unite themſelves together to irritate thy Pains and conſpire thy Deſtruction, as thou deſerveſt, in Punishment for having made them Accomplices of thy Sins, and ſubſervient to thee in offending thy Creator; on the contrary, there is not one but concurs to eaſe thee, or to compaſſionate thy Sufferings.

If

If Men unsuccessfully spend their Judgment and Remedies to cure thee, the Church, as a tender Mother, approaches thy Bed, *Psal. lix.* interests herself in thy Favour by her Prayers, in order to obtain from God an Alleviation of thy Pains, and render them supportable to thee by his Grace, in Expectation of Heaven, to which they are a sure way; she opens her Treasure in thy Favour; and not satisfied to cure the mortal Wounds of Sin, by the Application of the Merits of the Blood of Christ, she procures thee the Presence and strictest Possession of this adorable Saviour, this heavenly Physician, who, more sensible of thy Sufferings than of his own, *St. Aug.* comes to thy Assistance, and assures thee he was abandon'd by his Father on the Cross, in order to merit for thee his Consolations *St. Amb.* in thine; and that as thou unitest thy Sacrifice to his in the Dolours of Sicknes, and invokest his Mercy, he will grant thee the Assistance of his Grace, and fill thee with the interior Joy of his holy Spirit.

Ah! my Jesus, I can no longer behold the Evils thou hast suffer'd for my Salvation, without forming a Resolution to make better *St. Bern.* Use of those thou sendest me. Seeing that by my Sins I am the Cause of thy Death; seeing it is I who have so often solicited thy Condemnation by my Crimes; since it is I, cruel and ungrateful as I am, who have cover'd thee with Wounds, and crucified thee on *Mount-Calvary*, I am willing to ascend there after thee by Sicknes, I consent to be there a Partaker of thy Sufferings and die *St. Greg.*
as Mag.

as thou didst, in the most violent Pains; Sanctify them by uniting them to thine; support my Weakness against the Terrors of Death; grant me to imitate the Perfection of thy Sacrifice; render me quiet and submissive to thy Orders, meek, patient, moderate towards those who are employed in assisting me; give me that Humility of Heart and Mind, so proper to acquire these Virtues, and to procure me that Peace and Tranquillity of Soul so necessary in the last Moments of my Life. Let the Sight of thy Cross put me in mind of my Rebellion and numberless Offences, which have fix'd thee to it; and let thy holy Grace make me accept, with a Spirit of Penance, the Cross and Sickness with which thou loadest me, and upon which thou ordainest me to expire.

Make me Partaker, in my Sufferings, of that Silence which thou observeest in thine; grant me that as they shall seize on my Body, and cast my Soul into Dejection and Sorrow, inseparable from the Terrors of the Grave, I may turn my Eyes towards thee, raise my Voice to the Throne of thy Mercies, as thou didst thine, upon the Cross, to the Throne of thy Father's Justice, and that my Heart, at the terrible Approaches of Death, may supply the Defect of my Voice, to redouble, after thy Example, its Vows and Prayers.

May the Eyes of my Faith penetrate Heaven, and make me there see thee, as on the Cross, ready to assist me in the last and violent Conflicts I have to undergo, to the End, that after being supported by the Succour of thy

thy Grace, against the formidable Enemies of my Salvation, and animated to follow thee to *Mount-Galvary*, I may see thee at the Right Hand of God, and for ever partake of thy Glory.

C H A P. VII.

Acts and Sentiments of Penance proper for a CHRISTIAN in Sickness to dispose himself for confessing his Sins, in Consideration of the rigorous Account he is to give at the Tribunal of JESUS CHRIST, and of the Comfort he receives in putting Order, in due Time, to the Affairs of his Conscience.

O MY God, as there is no Condition more afflicting to Nature, than that of Infirmary and Pain, and as a sick Person, has need of all the Succours which Religion prescribes, in order to support and sanctify him; it is to thee I now address myself to obtain them. And as thou thyself, O my God, assurest me thou art the Support and Companion of every Christian who implores thee in his Afflictions, I have Reason to hope, *John ix. & Prov. xv.* unworthy as I am, for thy Presence in my Sufferings, and Attention to my Vows and Prayers.

It is true, O Lord, I deserve to be deprived of one and the other in the Days of my Sickness, after having so often despised them in the Days of my Health; it is true, I deserve to see executed on myself these terrible Threatnings: You will seek me, and shall not find me, I shall abandon you at the Hour of Death, because you have abandon'd me during Life. But, O my God, in the Conversion of a Sinner, thou consultest thy all-gratuitous Mercy, and it is from it I expect that Spirit of Penance necessary to reconcile me with thee; for I have thrown myself head-long, and even wallowed in the Filth of Sin, and it is not in the Power of my Will, without the Help of thy Grace, to raise myself; I have separated from thee, O my God, who art the Source and Life of my Soul, and I cannot, without thy Succour, draw near and reunite myself to thee.

St. Aug.

St. Prosp.

Osee xiii.

St. Bern.

*St. Aug.
in Psalm
lxxvii.*

If the Just stands in need of thy Grace, O my Saviour, to guide his Steps in the Paths of Christian Justice; if he cannot by himself walk in the Way of Salvation, how could a Sinner, like me, venture into that salutary Way, but thro' the Means of thy Grace, which breaks my Bands, enlightens my Darknefs and lends me a helping Hand, to withdraw me from the Abyfs into which my Sins have plunged me. Cast then, O Lord, the Eyes of thy Mercy on me, and grant that in beholding me, I may lift up my Eyes towards thee; have still Compassion on my Soul, which is the Work of thy Power, and the End of all the Mysteries of
the

the Abasements and Sufferings of thy Son. *Id. Aug. de Pec. l.*
 Remember thou art still my Father, and art not to become my Judge until the Hour of ii.
 my Death: Open then in my Favour the
 Intrails of thy tender and paternal Mercy,
 tho' I do not deserve to be treated as one
 of thy Children.

But, O my God, thy Apostle assures me,
 that the Means to avoid, in departing this
 World, the Rigor of thy Tribunal, and to *1 Cor. xi.*
 screen me from the formidable Decrees of
 thy Justice, is now to judge myself at the
 Tribunal of my Conscience, to conceive a
 sincere Sorrow for the Sins of which it shall
 accuse me, and to submit to the Sentence,
 full of Meekness, which the Priest, Minister
 of the Sacrament of Penance, and thy Vice-
 gerent upon Earth, shall pronounce against
 me. It is then with all the Sincerity and
 Exactness I am capable of, that I purpose
 from this time forward to enter into Judg- *Eccl. c.*
 ment, and pronounce Sentence against my- *xviii. v.*
 self. I will not wait till my Sicknes becomes *20.*
 violent, my Senses be weaken'd by Pain,
 and my Reason troubled and embarrassed at
 the Sight of the approaching Dissolution of *St. Aug.*
 my Body: I will not wait for the Approaches *de cura*
 of Death, to think on my Conscience and *anime.*
 disburden it of the fatal Weight of its Sins.
 The Business is now, my Soul, to make the
 Pains of Sicknes fruitful and meritorious;
 to render agreeable to God, the Vows and
 Prayers thou shalt address to him; to draw
 his Blessings on the Remedies which thou
 art to take, in order to assuage the Pains
 thou

thou sufferest; the Matter is to make a Confession which perhaps will be thy last, and on which depends that Rest and inward Peace, which God gives those who return sincerely to him; to repair, by this Confession, the Faults of all those thou hast made during thy Life, or at least to perfect them.

Is there, O my Soul, an Affair of greater Importance to Salvation? Canst thou promise thyself in the Height of thy Sickness, and when the Physicians shall have declared the Danger evident, the Presence of Mind necessary to manage it as it should be. Shut then thy Eyes from the very Beginning of thy Sickness against all worldly Objects; let the Retirement it obliges thee to enter into for the Ease of thy Body, remind thee of the Solitude necessary to purify thy Heart.

Eccl. c. Lift up thy Eyes towards Heaven; pray the
xvii. v. Father of Lights, who knows thy Sins (seeing
 17. he has been Witness of them) to illuminate thy Mind in order to discover the Number, Grievousness and Deformity of them; to make thee enter into the Recesses of thy Heart, impenetrable to all others but to him; to represent to thee the Portraiture of thy criminal Life, as it is present to his Eyes:

Sophon. c. And enlighten'd by this Divine Torch, which
 i. carries its Light into the most obscure and hidden Folds of our Conscience, consider, and weigh all thy Actions without flattering and deceiving thyself; examine into the very Intention which was the Principle of, and gave Birth to them; make thyself a severe Censor of all thy Faults, in order to obtain

Joh xiii.
& Heb.
 x. 32.

obtain Pardon the easier for them; examine thyself on the Sins committed in the different Ages of thy Life, on the Persons and Places thou hast frequented, on the Engagements and Employments thou hast had, on the Substance thou hast received or acquired, and the Use thou hast made of it; on the Sacraments thou hast so often approach'd thro' Custom, and perhaps without Fruit; on the Abuse or Neglect of infinite Graces, which God had prevented thee with to engage or retain thee in his Service; on thy Disobedience to his Laws, and to those of his Church.

Stop not at the Lustre of certain exterior Works of Piety; their specious Appearance has often deceived thy Pride; it is perhaps thyself, and not God that has been the End of them, seeing thou hast often perform'd them by a natural Habit, with a secret View of Honour, Interest, or human Satisfaction. Beg of God to remove the Veil of the fatal Illusion that has hid thee from thyself, and hinder'd thee from appearing to thy own Eyes, such as thou appearest in his Sight; to bring the Light of his Grace into the Darkness of thy Heart, in order to discover the secret Wounds which have escaped thy Sight, and animate thee to seek the Remedy for them in the Sacrament of Penance.

Ah! how happy and favourable, O my Soul, is the Sentence we pronounce now against ourselves, since it will subtract us at the Hour of Death from the Severity of the Tribunal of Jesus Christ, who will then be-

come

*St. Greg.
l. i. Moral. c. 21.*

*Ex Synodo
Petroco-
riensi.*

*Ecl. c.
xvii. v.
28.*

St. Greg. M. come a terrible and inexorable Judge, because he is, during Life, a Saviour full of Tenderness, Patience and Mercy.

I am willing then, O my Jesus, to condemn, in thy Presence, not only all that appear'd criminal and vicious in the Actions of my Life, but even what seemed often praise worthy in the Eyes of Men; persuaded, that in the Sight of a God, who is Purity and Sanctity itself, seeming good Actions will appear impure, and will be judged rather worthy of Anger than of Reward, if the Motive and other Circumstances of them be bad.

Idem.

*Greg. in
Job. c. xi.*

I own and acknowledge, that I have always been a bad and unfaithful Servant, seeing I refused to obey thy Orders; and if I have sometimes executed them, I am still but an unprofitable Servant, seeing, that without the Assistance of thy Grace, I could not so much as harbour a good Thought in order to Salvation.

St. Aug.

l. ix. c.

13.

Thus, O my Jesus, convinced of my sinfulness and Misery, I am willing to accuse myself to thy Minister, in order to prepare myself for appearing before thee at the Hour of my Death, as one absolved from the Sins for which he had already condemn'd himself, that so the Bar of thy Justice may become a Throne of Grace and Mercy to me. I confess, in thy Presence, O my God, that my Life has been past in a sinful Oblivion of my Faults; that I began to offend thee from almost the Commencement of my Being; and added Crime to Crime, the Number

ber of which increased with the Years of my Life.

Ah! my Saviour, the Excesses of my Life crowd so on my Spirits, that I cannot think on them without being penetrated with the most sensible Grief and Sorrow. What! to have so often disobey'd a God who had prevented me with his Graces, and loaded me with the most precious of his Gifts; born of God, his Child by Baptism, so often admitted to his Table, fed with his Word, and even his very Flesh, honour'd with his Confidence, Friendship and paternal Love; are there any Favours more singular than those? What! to have abused the Goodness of a God who had been so profuse in my Favour; what! to have broke all the sacred Engagements I made to faithfully serve thee; so long refused Submission to thy Orders, always adorable, to follow the Strayings of my Heart; profaned by my Crimes the Blood of the new Covenant; so often renewed the Outrages of the Passion of my Saviour; prefer'd in my Heart sensual Pleasures to the Graces God had offered me; renounced his Inheritance, to put myself under the Tyranny of the Devil, and render me an Associate of his Miseries.

1 Esdr. c. ix.

Psal. liv.

Ah! my God, every thing represents the Wounds of my Soul; Thoughts, Desires, Sins, shameful Circumstances, Contempt or Abuse of thy Graces, all my Iniquities incessantly pursue me, and even deprive me of my Rest. I own that I have very often deserved to hear these thundering Words pronounced

Thren. i. 14.

nounced against me: Be thou for ever cut off from the Inheritance of the Saints; let thy Death be as fatal as thy Life has been wicked; let it overwhelm thee all at once, and precipitate thee into Hell for the just Punishment of thy Crimes. But, my Saviour, seeing that thro' an incomprehensible Goodness to Sinners, of whom I am the greatest, thou camest thyself to call them to Repentance, let me not defer to embrace the Practice of it. Cover from this Moment my Face with a visible Confusion, to the End the World, which had been Witness to my Faults, may also be a Witness to my Sorrow and Repentance; grant me Grace to deplore in Publick, without Fear or human Respect, so many Sins which I was not ashamed to commit in the Sight of Men; let them know and learn from me, that those Sighs and Tears which I desire, are not shed for the Loss of a Health that must fail in a little time, but for having abused the Goodness of a God, whose Will is to save me and make me live eternally.

Psalms liv.

*St. Aug.
in Medit.*

*St. Leo. I.
1 De Vo-
cat. Gtn.*

St. Ephr.

Yes, O my Jesus, it's now more than ever that I have need to bend thy Justice by Compunction and Sorrow. Summoned very soon to appear at thy Bar, how terrible and fatal my Doom would be, if after so many Sins, of which I acknowledge myself Guilty, I should approach it at my Death, without having first purified myself by the Sacrament of Penance: Wash then away all my Offences, O my Saviour, in the secret Deluge of my Tears united to thine; bathe
my

my Soul in the salutary Waters of Penance; rend my Heart with Sobs and Sighs; and when at the Approaches of Death I shall be no more able to weep, grant, by thy Grace, that it may be said of me, not that I expire, but that I breathe up my Soul to thee. *St. Greg.*

I know the Greatness and Malice of my Iniquities; I have need of the whole Extent of thy Mercy to obtain Pardon for them. Let those, who are less Guilty than I, set some Bounds to their Sorrow, mine ought to have none, seeing I cannot enough lament my past Blindness, nor with too much Instance solicit thee to be the Physician of my Soul. Ah! my Jesus, if my Strayings have cost thee so much Sweat and Fatigues; if they have drawn so many Tears from thine Eyes, should I ever cease to lament and weep for them? *St. Aug. in Psalm xc.*

Grant me then, O Lord, a Fountain of Tears, to flow from my Eyes to extinguish the Flames of Hell, and hinder me from shedding there unprofitable and fruitless Tears. Prevent, by thy Grace, those eternal Regrets, which are unavailable to the Reprobate, that so I may avoid them. Join thy Love to this Gift of Tears, to operate in me a true and perfect Conversion; those Tears which flow from a contrite Heart, will manifest the Sincerity of my Repentance, be a Means of reconciling me with thee, of reinstating me in my Innocence, and of rendering to thy Divine Majesty, the Glory due to thee as Fountain of all Justice. Accompany the Regret of my Heart with an humble *Jerem. ix. & St. Bern.*

Baruc. ii. ble Confidence, and a secret Joy, that I may not be discouraged or fall into Despondency: But in granting me this Sorrow and those Tears, so necessary for the Remission of Sins, fill at the same time my Heart with the Consolation of thy holy Spirit, which prevents that sort of Sadness that dejects the Soul and makes it lose all Hopes in thy Mercy.

St. Greg.
M.

Tertul.
Lib. de
Panit.

Thou knowest, O my God, there is nothing more difficult for a Sinner, full of Pride and Self-love, than the Confession of his Sins to a Priest; but seeing it cost thee thy Life to merit the Pardon of them for me, ought I not to do myself Violence to deserve it? Am I ignorant that the Remedies which are most painful and violent to Nature, are the most salutary to the Soul? And as thou hast given me a positive order to reveal my Sins to a Priest in order to receive the Absolution of them, ought I to hesitate exposing myself in his Sight such as I am in thine?

Pf. lxxiii.

What! I was not ashamed to commit Sin in thy Presence, and shall I be ashamed to confess it to a Priest who has Power from thee to absolve me. No, I will be my own Accuser let the Confusion be ever so great to me; I will banish that Shame which would make me find my Condemnation and Perdition, where thou promisest me my Justification and Salvation; I will entirely humble myself here, in order to be exalted everlastingly.

Thou art faithful, O my God: Thou makest thy Mercy shine upon us, when we confess

confess our Miseries; thou annexest the Pardon of our Sins to the humble Confession of them and the Absolution of thy Minister; thou even effacest them out of thy Memory, by Means of the Sacrament of Penance.

Hasten then to me, O Priest of God, come as soon as possible, to the End, that I may obtain Mercy thro' thy Assistance; thank, I pray thee, the great Goodness of God towards me. Alas! after having addressed myself to thee with Confidence as often as I had offended him; after having so often received, by thy Ministry, the Benefit of the Absolution of my Sins, he orders me now to have Recourse to thee in this dangerous Conjunction. Thy Charity, resembling his, makes me hope for thy Assistance, to supply the Weakness which the State of Sickness causes in me, that I may rectify and perfect, by this Confession, a great Number of others which I might have made with little or no Fruit.

Prov.
xxviii.

James v.

For alas! how often have I frequented the Tribunal of Penance meerly thro' Custom? How many Confessions have I made without a sufficient Examination, and Purpose of Amendment? having but a superficial Sorrow for the Sins I revealed, endeavouring to hide the Malice or diminish the Shame that attends them. Join with me in Prayer to the Lord, that he may banish that fatal and dangerous Shame which prompts to conceal the Sin, or disguise the Enormity of it. Offer, I beseech thee, at the holy Altar the Sacrifice of our Reconciliation; ask the Suffrages

St. Amb.

St. Thom.
Aq.

Suffrages and Prayers of all good People, that God may grant me Grace to make a good Confession; pray him that there may be no Obstacle on my Side, which may hinder or diminish the Effect of the Sacrament I am going to receive. Let his sanctifying Grace, which accompanies thy Words and Absolution, cause in my Soul the same Purity with which the Soul of *Mary Magdalen* was embellished, after the Pardon which Jesus Christ pronounced in her Favour; to the End that at the Moment this Divine and adorable Saviour shall come to honour me with his Presence in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, I may appear before him with the Justice and Sanctity, that august and tremendous Mystery requires.

C H A P. VIII.

Acts and Sentiments of a CHRISTIAN in Sickneſs to excite himſelf, after Confefſion, to bear his Sufferings with the View of ſatisfying the Divine Juſtice for his Sins, which the Mercy of God has forgiven him.

Heb. iv.

IT was not to make my Sins known to thee, O my God, that I have revealed them to thy Miniſter, ſeeing thou haſt already read them in my Heart; but it was to humble myſelf in thy Preſence by this Retrospection on my criminal Life; to excite myſelf

myself to Sorrow at the Sight of its numberless Stains; to bend thy Mercy by my Sighs and Tears, which I pray thee favourably to look upon; it was to submit my Sins to the Tribunal of thy Church, in order to receive the general Pardon and Absolution of them. *Pf. xxxi. 1 & lv.*

Thou hast promised me, O my God, to ratifie in Heaven the Priest's Absolution; he has given it me according to the Ordinance of thy adorable Son, thro' whose Merits the Remission of Sins is obtained: Remember not then my Offences; not only those of which I have accused myself, but likewise the Sins I might have forgot, whether thro' the Treachery of my Memory, or the Weakness occasioned by my Sickness; I humbly beg Pardon for them, as well as for all the Sins which others might have committed thro' the Occasions and bad Example I had given them. *Salvian.*

Cast thy Eyes on Jesus, who has expiated them on the Cross, and washed them away with his Blood: Have regard to the infinite Merits of his Sufferings and Death; render thyself favourable to me, in Consideration of the infinite Credit he has at the Throne of thy Justice; renounce, thro' his Mediation, the Right thou hast to punish me in this and the other World; draw me near unto thee; reconcile me with thee; restore me thy Peace and thy Love, which Jesus has merited for me by his Dolors and Sufferings; renew his Divine Image in my Soul; cover me with his nuptial Garment; for, I hope, I may
now

now say, that by the Virtue of the Priest's Absolution, thou hast not only withdrawn my Soul from Hell, but deliver'd her from
Psal. cii. Death, put away all her Iniquities, reinstated her in her former Innocence, washed
Isa. i. her in my Saviour's Blood, and from being as red as Scarlet made her as white as Snow.

Thou, O Lord, hast operated in me this Miracle of Mercy; thou hast poured a Superabundance of Grace, where there was an Abundance of Sin; thou hast made me hear, by the Mouth of thy Minister, these salutary and comfortable Words: Thy Sins are forgiven thee; and I hope, O my God, that touched with Compassion at the Sight of the humble and painful Condition I am in, pitying me for the Evils which environ me, inclined to grant Pardon to a Sinner who asks it with Humility, thou hast effaced all my Iniquities, and cleansed me with the Blood of thy Son.

And it is this humble Confidence, that thou, O Lord, hast forgiven me all my Offences by the Priest's Absolution, which quiets my Mind, and diminishes the Sadness where-with my Soul is sometimes overwhelmed at the Sight of her Miseries; banishes that servile Fear of thy Judgments, which the Devil endeavours from time to time to excite in me, and gives me room to hope, that after having chastised me till Death, which is properly the Evening of my Life, thou wilt wipe away my Tears, and make me partake of the Joy of those who behold the fair Day of a happy Eternity.

But,

But, O my God, notwithstanding the Hopes I am in that thou hast forgiven me my Sins, and that my Conscience does not reproach me with any Deficiency in Confession; yet as I am not sure whether I am worthy of Love or Hatred, whether I am in thy Grace or Disgrace; in this Uncertainty, adoring the Depth of thy Judgments on me, grant I may incessantly humble myself in thy Sight, and that the continual Remembrance of my Sins may, thro' thy Grace, give me a salutary Fear, which is not inconsistent with the Absolution of them?

*Ecc. v.
Prov.
xxiii.*

Yes, O my God, I will preserve the Remembrance of Sins which have corrupted the Innocence of my Soul; not in order to love them, but to revolve them in the Bitterness of my Heart, retain the Confusion to have committed them, and the Acknowledgment for being absolved from them; because I know that a Soul truly contrite and humbled at the Sight of his Faults, easily obtains Pardon for them; that the Remission of Sin, which thy Mercy refuses not to a penitent Sinner, does not dispense from the Obligation of expiating them by Fruits worthy of Penance; and if in Consideration of the Weakness of my Body, thou exemptest me from it, thou orderest me to supply it by Patience in my sufferings, and by the Acceptance of all the Pains inseparable from this Sickness and the Death to which thou condemnest me.

St. Aug.

Ah! my Soul, is it not much better to satisfy the Divine Justice by these temporary Evils

*St. Cyr.
Lib. de
Lapsu.*

St. Bern.

Evils which his Grace asswages, than to pay with Rigor in Purgatory all the Debts thou owest him? In comparing the little Penance thou hast done with that which thy Sins deserve, and which the Primitive Church imposed on Sinners, oughtst thou not incessantly to thank the Goodness of God, that he is pleased to accept of Satisfaction in this World, and make thee to redeem, by the short Pains of Sicknes, the incomprehensible Pains which he might make thee justly suffer in the other.

St. Francis

Complain then no more, my Soul, in thy Sufferings; but rather say with Sentiments of Humility and sincere Sorrow: I acknowledge, O Lord, that I am the Cause of the Evils I suffer; I confess the Justice of the Severity with which thou treatest me. After having committed so many Sins, is it not just to bear the Punishment of them? After having given myself such deep Wounds, is it not reasonable to accept the Remedies proportioned to the Greatness of them? After having so often separated myself from God, by my Relapses into Sin, is it not fit I should feel the Dissolution of my Body by the frequent Attacks of Pains and Approaches of Death?

Thren.i.&

St. Hier.

Such, my Soul, ought to be thy Language in order to stifle the Complaints and Impatience of a Nature ever an Enemy to Sufferings. Remember likewise, that the Evils which ought truly to afflict a Christian are the Objects and Occasions which intice him to sin: It was then thou oughtst to strongly raise

*St. Aug.
Lib. de
Habitu
Virg.*

raise thy Voice towards the Lord, to ask his Succour in the Danger thou incurrst of losing thy Innocence; and yet how often hast thou loved the Danger and even the very Depth of Sin? *St. Greg. M. l. iv. Moral.*

Ah! penetrated with the deepest Sorrow for having so often committed it, submit thyself with a good Heart to the Sentence, which the Divine Justice pronounces against thee, in changing the eternal Punishment it deserves, into so short and salutary a Chastisement. Incessantly say unto him in the Violence of thy Sufferings: As I remember, O Lord, to have often offended thee; so I am willing to bear the Weight of thy Indignation here, that I may behold thee in thy Glory hereafter. I own, O Lord, that I am much indebted to thee; but enter not into Judgment with thy poor Servant; wait not till after Death to require the Payment of my Debts (take not Vengeance of my Sins according to Rigor) but use me with Indulgence, in Consideration of that Fund of Goodness which is in thee, and this Deluge of Evils which overwhelms me; open still the Bosom of thy Mercy to me, by casting thy Eyes on the low Situation I am in; be moved with Compassion at the Sight of my Sufferings and of the Tears which they draw sometimes from my Eyes; look upon me as a Victim which Pain sacrifices by Degrees to satisfy thy Justice; increase my Sufferings, if thou thinkest it proper, in order to supply what may be deficient in my Repentance; prolong not my Days but to pay
G thyself

*Tobia iii.**Mich. vii.**Pf. cxlii.*

thyself by the Merits of my Sufferings united to thine.

Yes, my Soul, such Sentiments as these, which the Grace of God inspires, will mitigate thy Pains, stifle, or at least diminish the Repugnance and disgust Nature has for Sickness, and animate thee to receive them from the Goodness of God, as a Pledge of thy perfect Reconciliation with him, and a Means to attain his heavenly Kingdom.

Surius.

What! oughtst thou to say often to thyself; if Jesus Christ has suffer'd so much to merit the Remission of my Sins, should I desire to expiate them without Bitterness and Sorrow? If the Innocent Jesus did bear our Sins on his Body fix'd to the Cross, should I, who am Guilty, refuse to bear the Pain of them in mine? If Jesus was cover'd with Wounds, in order to cure those I gave myself, should I suffer nothing to contribute to their Cure?

St. Bern.

No, my Jesus, I consent to partake of the Sufferings of thy Cross, which has been so salutary to me, by cheerfully accepting those of the Sickness thou sendest me, I am willing to drink of this Cup of Salvation, which has been so bitter to thee; I accept the Harshness of the Remedies, the Disgust, Weaknesses and Faintnesses proceeding from them, as well as the Irksomeness, Restlessness and Sadness, inseparable from a suffering Condition such as mine; I accept them, I say, as Occasions and Means, which thou offerest me to satisfy thy Justice. Suffer me, O Lord, to beseech thee to receive as a Part

of

of the Satisfaction I owe thee, whatever is sad, grievous and humbling in the Dependence I am in, of such as come to assist me; infinite, I submit to all that is frightful to Nature, in Death and the Grave, and offer it, before I depart this World, as a Sacrifice of Expiation for my Sins.

The Favour I beg of thee, is not to withdraw thy Mercy from me; not to break the Covenant thou hast made with me in Baptism, and which thou renewedst by the Absolution of thy Minister; to awake in thyself those Sentiments of Compassion and Tenderness, which thou hast promised with an Oath to always retain for a Servant, who carries thy Badge by Sufferings; to remember whilst thou punishest me with so much Justice, the Promises full of Clemency and Goodness thou hast made to our Fathers, *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, thy well beloved Servants; be satisfied with the Evils I now suffer, and save me from being a Victim to thy Justice hereafter: Afflict me as much as thou pleasest for the few Days I have to live; but permit not that, at the Hour of Death, the Enemy of my Salvation should lay on me those fatal Stripes which the Reprobate feel: Spare me not in this Life, but in ending it make me enjoy the Rest and Felicity of a happy Eternity.

Remember, in chastising me, thou art my Father, that this Title of Father, which is the unspeakable Source of the Goodness thou always hadst for me, engages thee to assuage my Pains, to support me with one Hand,

*Isa. liv.**Job v. 5**St. Greg.**Mag. Lib.**v. c. 7.**Mor.**Job vi.*

whilst thou strikest me with the other. My Body, thou knowest, has not the Strength of Brass, nor the Hardness of a Stone, but the Weakness of the Earth of which it is formed; forget not then, O Lord, this Weakness of my Origin; have regard to the Frailty of my Nature; be touch'd with Compassion, in beholding the Matter of which I am made; a Man formed of Earth, broke by the Stripes of Tribulation, always in Pain, weaken'd by so many Miseries, and often overfet by Sicknes; can he have Strength enough to bear the Weight of the Arm of a God, justly provok'd, unless he supports him by the Virtue of his Grace?

St. Basil.
Epist. 60.

Divine Jesus, I have Recourse to thee in the Evils with which I am surrounded; seeing thou hast clothed thyself with my Weakness, in order to be my Support and Redeemer, strengthen me in them by the Help of thy Grace. I unite my Sufferings to thine, that they may be advantageous to my Salvation, and satisfy thy Father's Justice: For, O my Jesus, as I could not be reconciled to him but thro' the Merits of thy Blood, these same Merits are still necessary to make my Sufferings truly satisfactory for the temporal Punishments due to my Sins.

Col. c. i.
& cap. ii.

O eternal Father, separate not my Pains from those of Jesus Christ thy dearly beloved Son; behold not my Sufferings but as united to his Passion: In casting thy Eyes on the Evils which I indure, and the Sacrifice I offer thee of my Life, turn them not from the Wounds and Death which thy Son received

St. Aug.

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ceived for Love of me; let thy Looks be at the same time on Jesus fix'd to the Cross, and on a penitent Sinner lying on the Bed of Sorrow, and thou wilt acknowledge the Covenant thou hast made to save me; give *St. Ecclesiasticus in Offic.* Ear to the Petition I make thee for the Remission of my Debts; thro' the Voice of the Wounds and Blood of my Saviour, open in my Favour all the Treasures of thy Mercies; weigh, in the Balance of the Cross, the Sins I have committed, and the Punishment they deserve, and thou wilt find, that the Sufferings of Jesus infinitely surpass the Weight of my Iniquities, and the Satisfaction I owe to thy Justice.

C H A P. IX.

Acts and Sentiments of a CHRISTIAN in Sickness, in order to prepare himself for the holy Viaticum, by which he desires to repair the Faults of preceding Communions, and possess within himself the precious Pledge of eternal Life.

O MY Jesus, now that thou hast begun to open, in my Favour, the Treasures of thy Church, that thou hast applied the Merits of thy Passion to me, by the Absolution of the Priest, and given me thy Peace and Love, which are the Fruits of it; suffer

me to beg the Continuance of them to the last Moment of my Life, that thy Mercy may engage thee to descend towards me, to be Witness of my Sufferings, to be touch'd with Compassion for them, to console my Soul in her Afflictions, to support and fortify her before she be environ'd and seized by the violent Pains of Death.

*St. Cyril.
Alex. Lib.
iv. in
Joan.*

This, O my Jesus, ought now to be my chief Desire and the Object of my Vows and Prayers to Heaven, convinced that by thy Visit and Abode within me, I shall possess the heavenly Physician who has restor'd me to Grace, and will, I hope, change this mortal Life into a glorious and immortal one, whereof the Sacrament of thy Body is the precious Pledge.

*Eccl. in
Off.*

Ah! my Soul, let these salutary Words of thy Saviour be now the Subject of thy Meditation; this Day I will honour thy House with my Presence, make thy Heart the Place of my Habitation, bestow there the most singular of my Gifts and Favours, admit thee to my Table, feed thee with my Flesh, make thee Partaker of my Divine Life, give thee the Pledge of that Glory which I enjoy myself, and sow in thy Suffering and sick Body the Seed of a happy Immortality. Had ever any Nation or People so great an Advantage as this? Not satisfied to humble and abase myself so far as to be made Man, and die on a Cross for thy Salvation, I have left thee besides the Sacrament of my Body, to renew in thee the Remembrance of my Benefits, and give thee,
by

by the Union of my Nature to thine, a Pledge of that happy Life, which I acquired for thee by my Death. *St. Thom. Aq.*

But, my Soul, if the Communion of the Body of Christ makes the greatest Happiness of a Christian on Earth, in Expectation of the Joys of Heaven; if Life is not desirable but to have the Happiness to possess God, and to experience in oneself the miraculous Transmigration of the Divinity into the Heart of Man, and of the Heart of Man into the Divinity; what Preparation and Trial ought to precede the Reception of this Mystery, the most tremendous of our Religion? For the Business is to partake of what is most grand and precious in Heaven and in Earth; to receive the Sacrament of the Love and Tenderness of thy Saviour. *Deut. xxviii. & St. Aug.* What Respect and Reverence, what Purity and Innocence, what Love and Fervency, ought not consequently thy Heart to be fill'd with?

Ah! my Soul, incessantly lamenting not to have brought these necessary Preparations to so many Communions, thou hast made during the Course of thy Life, repair at least by this, which will perhaps be thy last, the Outrages and Indignities, or at least, Irreverence and Lukewarmness that attended them. Address thyself to thy Divine Saviour; expose to him thy Weakness and Incapacity to make thy Heart, without the Succour of his Grace, a Temple worthy of his Sanctity and Grandeur. Thank him, that he is pleased still to remember thee, un-

St. Aug.
Lib. x.
Conf.

worthy as thou art, and to chuse thy Heart to be on Earth the Place of his Abode; ardently pray him to purify it by the Fire of Charity, humble it at the Sight of its own Nothingness and of thy supreme Majesty, and inflame it with the Ardor of Divine Love.

St. Bern.

O Bounty of my Saviour, worthy the Admiration and Praise of all Creatures, seeing it pleaseth thee to console me in so Divine a Manner in my Affliction, duly prepare me to receive within myself, the Sacrament of thy adorable Body; inspire me, on this Occasion, with the Thoughts, Words and Supplications proper to invite thee to me; teach me how to behave in the Manner most agreeable to thy Presence; sanctify my Soul; empty her of whatever may be displeasing to thee, and fill her with thy holy Grace, that thou mayest possess her pure and spotless for ever.

St. Aug.

I accept, O my Jesus, this Sickness as a Preparation, for the Communion I am going to receive: As it was but in the Desert, thou gavest thy People the *Manna* and miraculous Bread, which was the Figure of this celestial Bread, thou givest in the Sacrament of thy Body; so thou hast led me into the Solitude and Wilderness of my Heart, where, after having shewn me its Stains and Filth insupportable in thy Sight, thy Mercy presented me the salutary Pool of Penance, to wash me in.

But, O my Jesus, after having wash'd my Heart by the Sacrament of Penance, I ought still,

still, in order to make it the more worthy to receive thee, purify it as much as possible from its Affection to earthly Things, its Attachment to the World and this Life, of which thou wilt have me make, after thy Example, a voluntary Sacrifice; wash me then thyself, O Lord, more and more, by an abundant Infusion of thy Grace and Love; make me humble myself incessantly in thy Presence, at the Remembrance of my Sins; adorn my Soul with all Christian Virtues, *St. Hier. in Mor.* that she may be a Habitation fit for thee to dwell in for ever.

This Moment, that I am to receive the Summary of all the Mysteries of Religion, in the Sacrament of thy adorable Body, assist me, by thy Grace, to make Acts of the three essential and fundamental Virtues of Religion, without which one cannot die a good Christian, and in the Practice of which every Christian ought always to live. *St. Aug.*

O my Jesus, tho' hid under the Species of Bread and Wine, my Faith confesses and adores thee, as the only Son of God, the Master who instructs me in the Truths of Salvation, either by thyself in the holy Scriptures, or by thy Church which thou enlightenest and guidest by thy Holy Spirit. *St. Thom. Aq.*

I firmly believe, that thou hast descended from Heaven, and abased thyself so far as to be made Man, in order to raise me to thee: I believe, that to spread and perpetuate this Mystery of thy Incarnation and Abasement, even to the Death of the Cross, thou hast left to thy holy Church the sacred

St. Cypr.

Ecc. iii.

Depositem of thy Divine Flesh, to be the Food, Support, Strength and Life of my Soul; I ardently desire to receive thee, so to unite me to thee out of Obedience to the Command thou hast laid on me to do it, to receive Courage in the hard Conflicts, I shall have to undergo against the Devil, and to procure me, by this Union, the eternal Life of which this Sacrament is the Pledge. I believe thy Real Presence in the Eucharist, and by the essential Union of thy adorable Person with the Father and the Holy Ghost, I believe the Divinity of the three Persons, contain'd under the Veil of this Sacrament, which is as much the Effect and Production of thy Love for me, as thy Death and Passion, of which this Sacrament is a Memorial and Representation. I stedfastly believe, O my Jesus, the Truth of the three principal Mysteries of the Christian Religion, and all the other Articles and Points of Faith, which thy holy Church proposes to me: I Sacrifice to thee, with a good Heart, the Light of my Reason, by the perfect Submission of my Understanding; since by this Submission, I render Homage to the Depth of thy Wisdom, and to the Sovereignty of thy Power: I beseech thee to receive my Life, as if I gave it, for the Defence of these same Truths; thrice happy for me, if by the Confession I make of the Obscurity of my Faith, I may be made worthy to attain, to the more perfect Knowledge of thy Divinity.

I lift up to thee, O Divine Jesus, my Heart with all its Vows and Desires; thou art the only Object of them, because the Belief and Faith of thy holy Word, is the Basis and Foundation of them: Thou hast created and redeem'd me for thyself; the Effusion of thy adorable Blood has succeeded the Work of thy all-powerful Arm, in order to fix all my Hopes in thee, and in the Participation of the Glory thou enjoyest thyself in Heaven: I hope then, O my Jesus, to partake of the Inheritance of thy Father, which thou hast merited for me by thy Sufferings, and of which I am going to receive a Pledge, in the Sacrament of thy Love.

O my Jesus, can it be, that my Heart should be still cold and indifferent, after so many shining and singular Proofs of thy Charity for me? Thou declarest to me, that thou wilt not only manifest thyself to me, and honour me with thy Visit, but also *John xiv.* make thy everlasting Abode with me; thou invitest me to feed on the Bread of Angels, that I may have Courage to depart this World, and reunite myself to thee in Heaven. Is there any Invitation more strong? Can my Heart refuse answering to such ardent Love, and not earnestly desire thy Approaches full of Tenderness and Bounty? As thou hast had no greater Desire than to die for, and give thyself to Man, grant, Divine Jesus, that all my Vows may be to receive thee, before I am seiz'd with the acute Pains inseparable from that Death, of which I must soon

St. Aug.

soon undergo the Sentence: Seeing I have Recourse to thee, in the pressing Necessity I am in, let me not depart this Life, without being fed with thy Body and Blood. Thou art the Bread of Life; give thyself to my Soul, which languishes for thee; thou art her true Spouse: Unhappy are those, who delay to unite and incorporate themselves, with thee. Permit not, that any Obstacle, should oppose the Reception of thy adorable Body, and of that holy Viaticum that is to support me in the way to thee; suspend all, Events or Sicknefs that might deprive me of the Happiness to lodge thee within me; may I look on the Privation of this Divine Food, as a Subject of the greatest Grief a Christian ought to be in, at his Departure out of this World, because of the hard Conflicts he is to sustain against Death and Hell; may I not defer asking it, thro' a false Fear of an approaching Death, since it is the Source of true Life, and of a happy Immortality. Give me, as to *Zacheus*, a holy Impatience to see thee enter into this House, from the very first Appearance of Danger I shall be exposed to, during this Sicknefs; give those who shall be Witnesses to it, Zeal and Charity enough to remind me of it: May my Soul then turn itself altogether towards thee, ardently desire thy coming, and shew her Earnestness to receive thee, that she may no more concern herself with the Objects of this World.

St. Aug.

But, O my Jesus, as this ardent Desire of being united to thee proceeds from thy Grace,

Grace, infuse it abundantly into my Heart, that I may say with thy Apostle: Thou knowest, O Lord, I love thee; and since I love thee, when shall I appear before thee? When wilt thou give thyself to me? When shall I lodge thee in my Heart? If my Love for thee is not (as that of many Saints) strong enough to engage me to get out of my Bed, notwithstanding the Weakness of my Body, in order to receive thee, at least let my Soul meet thee by its Affections and Desires; let her hear with Joy the Signal of thy Arrival; and abased in thy Presence at the Consideration of thy supreme Grandeur, *St. Aug. c. lii. de Virgin.* and the infinite Lowness of her own Condition, let her receive thee with the Respect and Adoration due to thy Divine Majesty; let her be adorn'd and cloath'd that Moment with the nuptial Garment, without which it's not permitted to approach thee in the Sacrament.

But, O my Jesus, in inviting me so powerfully to correspond with the Graces and Favours, with which thou vouchsafest to prevent me, thou commandest me to destroy and stifle in my Heart all Hatred, Resentment, and even Indifference for my Neighbour, whom thou declarest to be my Brother: As we are all but one Body, of which thou art the Head, thou wilt have no Division to reign among the Members of it; as *Rom. xii.* thou hast admitted us all, by Baptism, to be of the Number of thy Children, and givest us all the same Food and Bread in the Eucharist; it is thy Will that this Unity of the same

*Tertul.**St. Greg.
M.*

same Sacraments should form and entertain in us Union, Society and mutual Love; it is thy Will that the Enjoyment of the same Benefits upon Earth, and the View of the same Rewards in Heaven, should be an Engagement to us to live in Peace with our Neighbour, and a Motive to make it up with him, when we have the Misfortune to be divided. Is there, O my Jesus, a more just and reasonable Law? What! thou hast united thyself to Man, notwithstanding the infinite Difference between thee and him; thou lovedst him so far as to give thy Life for his Salvation, tho' he was thy declared Enemy; and shall Men who are all Brethren, instructed in the same Truths, admitted to the same Table, and called to the same Happiness, fall out for Trifles, or every slight Difference of Humour.

*Collof. iii.
13.*

Ah! my Jesus, I humbly beg Pardon, that after having given me the Precept and Example of pardoning Injuries on the Tree of the Cross, I refused it sometimes to those, by whom I thought myself offended: Pardon me, for having denied those my Love, whom thou hast honour'd with thine, to the very Effusion of thy Blood: Pardon me, for having so often betray'd and condemn'd myself, in asking thee every Day the Remission of my Sins, without shewing Mercy to my Brethren; Pardon me, my Jesus, for having so often render'd ineffectual that Grace of mutual Love thou hast ask'd of thy Father for us. Give me, from this to the Hour of my Death, a Heart pierced with the Love of

of thee, and of my Neighbour; grant me Grace to always ask, with Humility, Pardon and Mercy for those who may think themselves offended by me, and retain still their Resentment for it.

But, my Soul, if the Means to draw God's Mercy on thee, is to exercise it in Favour of thy Neighbour; that Mercy and Love, which he commands thee to have for him, ought to be attended with Compassion and Benevolence; that is to say, God is not satisfied that we should shew our Affection for the Person that might have offended us; he wills, that after having gain'd his Soul by our Meekness and Humility, we should assist him, in his corporal Necessities; by our Liberality and Charities. *Eccl. xvii. & Rom. xlii.*

Ah! my Soul, how agreeable is such an Effusion of Love to God; he freely offers, by the Sacrament of his Body and Blood, Grace and Salvation to those, who, not satisfied with making Restitution before Death of ill-gotten Goods, look upon themselves no more than Stewards over those which God has confided to their Care: They make their Riches, as it were, Intercessors for them in the Sight of God, who promises to protect, against the Enemies of Salvation, to comfort and assist on the Bed of Sorrow, those who are attentive to the Necessities of the Poor, in order to help them; as on the contrary, he declares he will treat with Rigor and without Mercy, such as are deaf to their Cries and Petitions. *Luke xix.* Defer not then, my Soul, to repair, before receiving the Viaticum, all

all the Damages thou mightst have done, and to distribute some Part of thy Substance, to the Poor; for by doing Justice and Alms-deeds, God will purify thee from thy Sins; thou wilt obtain Mercy from him, appear with Confidence before him, and be replenish'd with the Riches of his heavenly Habitation, whither the Sacrament thou art going to receive is to conduct thee.

Some Moments before our SAVIOUR enters thy House; say,

BEHOLD, my Soul, thy God, thy Saviour and thy King, who comes to make thee partake of his Sweetnesses and Conso-
Mat. xxv. lations; he takes the Title of Spouse, in order to unite himself more intimately with thee; cease not to humble thyself in his Presence; acknowledge thy Indignity, and the Excess of his Love towards thee; beseech the Father of Mercies to render the adorable Body of his Son, which thou art going now to receive, salutary to thee; beg of the holy Virgin and all the Saints, the Succour of their Prayers, to obtain of God the Grace to receive this Holy Host, not to thy Perdition, but to thy Salvation; address thyself to Jesus, the Saint of Saints, and say to him with Sentiments of Faith, Humility and Confidence: Who am I, O Lord, to be honour'd with thy Visit: Why dost thou regard a Vessel so frail and full of Iniquity? How vouchsafest thou to enter into so strict an Union with me, who am but a confused
Luke. i.
 45. Heap.

Heap of Miseries? What! thou, my God,
 whom Heaven and Earth cannot contain,
 vouchsafest to come to dwell in me. What! *2 Paral.*
 thou who art the Bread of Angels, and De- *vi.*
 light of the Saints, commandest me to carry
 thee within me, who am polluted with so
 many Crimes? What! thou who art the
 Ark of the New Covenant, the Seal of the
 Peace of Heaven and Earth, wilt enter into
 my House, who have so often declared War
 against thee. Ah! if the Righteous are
 seiz'd with Dread and Fear in approaching
 thee; if what is holy ought not to be given
 but to the holy, ought I not rather to de-
 sire thee to retire from me because I am
 a Wretch and a Sinner; I am not worthy
 thou shouldst enter into my House, but,
 one Word from thy sacred Mouth is enough
 to cleanse my Soul, and cure my Body:
 And as it is thy Pleasure, to humble thy
 Grandeur to my Nothingness, to Visit me *Pf. xviii.*
 thro' Mercy on this Bed of Sorrow, and *&c.*
 make me thy Habitation, by the Reception
 of thy Sacrament, permit not that I should
 receive it to my Judgment and Condemna-
 tion; but that it may be a wholesome Re-
 medy for my Body and Soul; grant that this
 Viaticum of thy adorable Body may pro-
 cure everlasting Life to the one and the
 other.

Holy Virgin, who hast carried in thy chaste
 Womb, the same God I am going to re-
 ceive, obtain for me some Share of that In-
 nocence and Humility, which gain'd thee
 the Title of his Mother; grant that, thro'
 thee,

thee, Jesus may be given to me as a Pledge of my Salvation, as thro' thee he has been given to the World for its Redemption.

All ye Saints of Heaven, who have shewn so much Fervour at your Death, for this salutary Viaticum which the Bounty of our Saviour grants me, obtain for me some Share of that Desire and Love, with which your Hearts were always inflamed.

Behold, my Soul, the holy Church thy tender Mother, who always interests herself in thy Favour at God's Throne, is going to beseech him to cure thee of all thy Evils, both Spiritual and Corporal, if it be more suitable to thy Salvation; she is going to beg of him, at least to grant thee Grace to bear thy Sufferings with Patience and Courage, to resist all the Temptations of the Devil, at the Hour of Death. Join then thy Vows and Prayers, to those of her Ministers; exert all the Powers of thy Soul, to the end thou mayest receive with Respect, Purity and Fervour, the great Present which God is going to make thee of himself in the holy Eucharist.

Psalm xix.

& lx.



CHAP.

C H A P. X.

Acts and Sentiments of Adoration and Acknowledgment of a CHRISTIAN in Sickneſs, after receiving the Viaticum, in order to intirely devote himſelf to JESUS CHRIST till Death, and to look upon himſelf as a Victim that ought to live in Expectation of conſum-mating his Sacrifice.

NOW, my Soul, that thy Creator and God, dwells and reſides within thee, render him, in Silence, thy moſt profound Homage and Adoration; admire his Goodneſs towards thee; inceſſantly teſtify thy Gratitude to him; expoſe thy Miſeries before him; beſeech him to be the Phyſician of thy Soul, and thy Protector againſt the Enemies of thy Salvation; make, with a good Heart, a Sacrifice of thy Life to him, and let thy whole Occupation be to think of the happy Eternity to which this Viaticum, that is the Pledge of it, is to lead thee. *Eccl. xxiv.*

Vener.
Bede.

Sovereign Maſteſty of my Jeſus, my Divine Redeemer, reſide in my Soul, which thou haſt choſen for thy Place of Abode; I adore thee there with the moſt profound Reſpect, greateſt Reverence and Humility a Creature is capable of: I unite my Adorations to thoſe of all the Saints, Angels and Seraphins,

Seraphins, who prostrate themselves before thee in Heaven; I join my Homage to that which the holy Church has always paid thee on Earth; which thou thyself renderedst thy Father, in the Days of thy mortal Life, and ceaseſt not to render his ſupreme Grandeur, in the Sacrament which I juſt now received.

Gal. ii.

May I live no more, O my Saviour, but by the Life thou now haſt given me; live thyſelf entirely in me, to the end that thro' thee, in thee, and with thee, I may continually humble myſelf before the Divine Majeſty, which honours me with his Preſence and Gifts, and render him the Honour, Glory and Praise due to him. O Wonder of the Humility of my Jeſus! O incomprehenſible Bounty of my God! Thou who formerly terrifiedſt Men by thy Preſence; thou whoſe

Exod. xx.

Words coming from amidſt Thunder and Lightning, ſtruck them with the Terrors of Death; it's thou who haſt render'd thyſelf humble, meek and familiar, ſo far as to come to me, to dwell in my Heart and communicate thy own Life to it: Thou who haſt been for many Ages the deſir'd of Nations, the Object of the Vows of the Patriarchs and Prophets, it's thou thyſelf whom my Mouth has received, and who repoſeſt in my Breſt; it is thou thyſelf, who poſſeſſeſt all the Powers of my Soul, in making her live by thee; it's thou thyſelf, who art ſo intimately united to me, that I can hardly diſtinguiſh my Heart from thine.

St. Bern.

O Heavens! be aſtoniſh'd to ſee the God, who makes in the Habitation of his Glory,
the

the Felicity of Angels and Saints, give himself as Food to Man, who is here below in a Vale of Misery and Infirmary. Behold with Admiration the God of infinite Majesty, who becomes the Aliment of his poor Servant, and makes it his Delight to abide with him.

What Acknowledgment, O my Jesus, *Psalms cxv.* shall I make thee for so many Favours? What shall I do to answer to them? Not satisfied to have given me, by Faith, the Title of Child of God, thou likewise feedest me, in this august Sacrament, with thy own Body and Blood.

Ah! my Soul, never cease to publish his Mercies in thy Favour; never forget the Graces thou hast received from him; invite all the Saints, who dwell in Heaven and on Earth, to bless and thank him for thee. What do I say, O my Jesus! all the Angels and Men cannot sufficiently signify to thee my Gratitude; so addressing myself to thee, with the Tenderness of a Heart, penetrated with the deepest Sense of thy Favours, I beg that all the Affection of thy Divine Person may satisfy for me, and supply my Deficiency in rendering thee, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, the Glory, Honour, Praise and Thanksgiving which are thy due.

I possess thee, O my amiable Saviour, do thou reciprocally possess me; thou givest thyself to me without Reserve, may I be wholly thine; thou reposest in me thro' Love, grant I may repose in thee thro' Charity; thou behavest in my Favour, with all the Tenderness

St. Bern.

derness of a Father, give me for thee, all the Submission of a Child; thou promisest me to have always thy Eyes upon me, may mine likewise be always lifted up towards thee. These mutual Looks, this reciprocal Love will be my Consolation in my Afflictions, seeing that in beholding thee, thou wilt make me partake of that Tranquillity which thou enjoyest thyself; and I, in beholding thee, shall find that profound Peace which the Violence of my Sufferings cannot take from me.

Pj. xxiv.

St. Aug.

May I never cease, O my Jesus, to be always attentive to the Happiness of thy Presence within me: Separated by Sicknes from the Company of Men, may this Separation engage me to look upon thee alone, in order to expose to thee the Miseries and Afflictions with which my Heart is pierced. Thou art the heavenly Physician who has approach'd the Bed on which I lie sick, and thou hast united thyself to my Flesh, by the Sacrament of thy Love; may this Union engage thee to support me, in this sorrowful Condition I am in. All living Creatures lift up their Eyes towards thee, O Lord, in Hopes to receive their Food from thee; thou hast fed me with thy adorable Flesh, and inebriated me with thy precious Blood, in the time most favourable to my Salvation; grant I may forget my Sufferings, in order to taste only the Sweetnesses which are in thee; may I always consider the Excellence of this celestial Food, beyond that of all corporal Aliments, which cannot preserve us from

from perishing, and which perish themselves, *John vi.*
 whereas thy Flesh is always living, and makes
 us live for ever.

Thou art my Saviour, thou canst cure my
 Body if thou pleasest, all Things in Heaven
 and on Earth obey thee; the Power of thy *St. Aug.*
 Arm has operated great Wonders and mira- *in Psalm*
 culous Cures, when and in whose Favour, *cii.*
 thy Wisdom full of Bounty judged it pro-
 per: So I ask thee not to cure my Body,
 but according to thy Pleasure; I even grant
 it has deserved Death a thousand and a
 thousand times, and I accept it out of Obe-
 dience to thy Orders who condemnest me
 to it; but as for my Soul, I conjure thee to
 heal her Wounds, that she may not see ever-
 lasting Death. Thou art her Judge, she *Deut.*
 hears thy Voice, which cites her in a little *xxxi. 14.*
 time to appear at thy Tribunal, where she *& St.*
 is to receive her Doom for all Eternity; may *Gertr.*
 thou first behold her with Mercy, declare
 thyself her all-powerful Physician, and make
 her hear these comfortable Words: I will,
 be thou cured: May thy holy Soul sanctify
 mine, and destroy those inordinate Affecti-
 ons, that Love of herself and of this tran-
 sitory Life: May the Grace of thy holy
 Spirit enlighten the Darkness of mine, that
 I may see the Snares and Temptations of
 this wicked World, out of which we can-
 not too soon depart, that we may not be *Sap. iv.*
 Witness to its Scandals, but be preserved *10.*
 from its Corruption, and reunited to God,
 in whom alone consists our true and solid
 Happiness. May thy Heart, enflamed with
 Love

Zach. ii.
10.

Love and Charity, make mine sensible that the Yoke of the Sufferings of this Life, is light to a Christian who loves thee; grant my poor Heart, which is troubled and sorrowful at the Approaches of Death, the Grace incessantly to consider the Union it has contracted with thee, and the Happiness it has to repose in thy Breast; that so the continual Remembrance of the Sanctuary it has in thee, may impose Silence on Nature, which often reflects on her Pains, in order to complain of; or seek some Remedy for them; banish from my Heart the Grief it is in, to depart this wicked World, and give it the Courage necessary to enter into the narrow Path of a happy Eternity. May thy precious Blood offer'd to God on the Cross, in order to purify the World from the Filth of Sin, cleanse my Conscience from all manner of Stains and Corruption.

Heb. xii.
24.

I have approach'd thee, O my Jesus, who art the Mediator of the new Alliance; my Soul has received by the Sacrament of thy adorable Body, the Asperision of thy Blood, which cries for Mercy in her Favour; pronounce then on her, I beseech thee, these blessed and comfortable Words: I am thy Salvation, I come to bring thee Tidings thereof, give thee a Pledge of it by the Visit I now make thee; I am come to apply the Merits of my Labours, Sufferings and Death to thee; I am come to unite myself to thee, by the Links of eternal Love, and to defend thee from the Snarcs of the numberless Enemies which environ thee.

Luke xix.

St. Amb.

Come

Come then, O my Jesus, to fight along with me against Death and Hell: Thou hast overcome them on the Cross; assist me to conquer them on this Bed of Sorrow. May the Food thou hast given me, strengthen me, in my Sufferings, against the Enemies of my Salvation; thou art Witness of their Malice against my Soul; but remember, my Jesus, that she is the Work of thy Hands, and Fruit of thy Sufferings; so permit not that thy Blood should be ineffectually shed for her; suffer not that my Soul, which is fed by thee the living Bread, should ever relapse into Sin, thro' my own Frailty, or the Temptation of the Devil. Be not satisfied to give her the powerful Succour of thy Grace, but render her, by thy Presence within her, invincible to all her Enemies.

*Psal. ix.**Jerem.**xv.*

Thou exhortest me, O my Jesus, not to lose Courage at the Sight of all the Dangers that encompass me; for having given thyself to me, and standing by my Side, and residing within my Heart, thou wilt not deny me this powerful Succour, so necessary in the last Moments of my Life: It's true, Divine Bounty, there is nothing more comfortable for a dying Person, than to possess the Author of Life; nothing more formidable to the Devil, than the Presence of the Lord of Hosts, and the Source of all Grace: It's true, I can easily overcome, and put them to flight by thy Assistance; but Wretch as I am, how often have I thro' my Freewill, yielded to the least Onsets of my Enemy? On how many Occasions have I given

*Sophon. iii.**St. Chrys.**St. Aug.**Tertul. c. v.*
de Penit.

up my Soul, which is the Work of thy Hand, and Price of thy Blood?

O my Jesus, the Remembrance of my past Cowardise and Perfidy makes me look upon myself as unworthy of the Succour, which is still so necessary for me. Yet remember, sweet Saviour of my Soul, that I am thy Handy-work, the Object of thy Redemption, thy Child and Friend; may all these happy Titles, which thou hast given me in Baptism, touch now thy Heart, stop the just Severity of it, and draw upon me thy merciful Tenderness: Grant me the Pardon of all my past Infidelities, in this Moment so favourable to obtain it; I beg it of thee, thro' the Merits of thy Sufferings and Death, which I shall not cease to keep fresh in my Memory, in order to conform mine to them.

1 Cor. xi. Once more, my Jesus, Pardon me for having so often neglected, in receiving thy precious Body and Blood, to contemplate thy Sufferings and Death, of which this Sacrament is a Memorial and Representation: Thou didst institute it the Eve of thy Passion, to engage me to consider, in receiving it, the infinite Evils which thy Love was to make thee suffer for my Salvation: Grant me, I beseech thee, to make it my whole Occupation for the few Days I am to live, to meditate on the shameful Indignities, and unheard of Cruelties which thou hast suffer'd during the time of thy Passion.

Is it possible, my Soul, that after having received the Sacrament of the Body and Blood

Blood of thy Saviour, which is at the same time a Memorial of the great Martyrdom, he suffer'd on the Cross for thy Salvation, and a Channel of Graces necessary to support thee in the Evils to which he condemns thee, thou shouldst refuse, or hesitate to indure them with Patience, and out of Love for him? Does not Religion shew thee with what Instance all the Saints, fortified by the same Sacrament thou hast received, ask'd of our Saviour to let them suffer?

*Ruper.
Abbas.*

With what Courage they incounter'd Dangers, with what Ardor they ran to the Place of Punishment and Death? Their Life was burthensome to them, and they desired nothing but the Possession of God who is the Source of true Life. No, no, my Jesus, I will not render ineffectual the Graces with which thou replenishest me by thy Real Presence in this Sacrament; I am willing to follow thee to *Mount-Calvary*, and sacrifice there my Life for thee.

St. Bern.

*Orig. Hom
xxii. in
Genes.*

But, O my Divine Saviour, in Expectation of the great Sacrifice which I am to make thee of myself, by the Loss of this perishable Life which I loved but too much; in Expectation of becoming, by my Death, a Victim destroy'd and immolated to thy Grandeur, I offer thee the Sorrow of my Heart and the Humiliation of my Mind; I offer thee my Prayers, Sighs and Tears; vouchsafe, O Lord, to look upon them as agreeable to thee, as thou didst the Sacrifice of *Abel* and *Abraham*. It is with this Disposition of Heart and Mind that I desire, O

St. Greg.

H 2

my M.

my Jesus, to render my Soul into thy Hands; as thou denoucest thy coming by the Danger of Sicknes, my whole Desire is to prepare myself for it, by dying to the World, immolating myself in thy Sight, sighing for thy Presence, asking thee the end of my Exile, and the Entrance into thy Kingdom.

Idem.

3 Reg xix.

Act. x.

Such ought to be, my Soul, the Fruit of the Communion of the Body and Blood of thy Saviour, which thou hast received, it is call'd the Viaticum of the Sick, because it is the Food that is to support thee in the way from this Earth to Heaven; let the Thoughts of this Journey be now thy whole Occupation; feed thyself with the Hopes of a future Happiness; live only in Expectation to reign with God who will satisfy all thy Desires; make him the only Object of thy Vows and Prayers; lift up thy Heart and Thoughts towards the eternal Mansions to which thou art call'd; look upon thyself as already a Citizen of the celestial *Jerusalem*; let thy Discourse correspond with thy Hopes: Thy Saviour Jesus Christ discourses with his Apostles only on the Kingdom of Heaven, forty Days before his Ascension; thou hast perhaps fewer Days to be in this World, have then no longer an Attachment to it, expect nothing for the future from Men, or this perishable Life; quit it with a good Heart for the Love of Jesus, who being above all, has quitted all, even his very Life, for thy Salvation; earnestly desire the Possession of this dear Master, who died and rose from the Dead to make thee Partaker of

of the Happiness which he himself enjoys; place all thy Confidence in God who honours thee with his Presence and Favours; submit to his holy Will in the Condition to which he reduces thee, be no more anxious about thy Health or temporal Affairs, nor attach'd to this Life but in Submission to God's Orders; let him be Master to put an end to it by Death when he shall think proper; avoid Impatience, how long and violent soever thy Sufferings may appear to be; let the Remembrance of that terrible *Anathema* pronounced against the Impatient in the Days of Trial, be a Motive to curb and calm the Emotions of Nature; turn to thy eternal Profit all the precious Moments of a State which makes thee so conformable to the Humiliations and Sufferings of the Son of God; lose not, for want of Submission and Patience, the Right he gives thee to his Kingdom; let thy greatest Fear be to see thyself banish'd from it thro' thy own Fault; incessantly beg of thy aimable Saviour, who is pleas'd to lodge within thee, to remain there to the last Gasp, that he may conduct thy Soul at her Departure out of this World to the Mansions of the Blessed, and preserve for thy Body the Right he has given it to a glorious Resurrection. *Eccl. ii. St. Amb.*



C H A P. XI.

Exercise of the Faith of a CHRISTIAN in Sickness, to animate him to suffer with Patience the Evils which environ him out of Fear of the Pains with which we are threaten'd after Death.

St. Aug.

Apo. xii.

O MY Soul, thy Lord and God, who is come to honour thee with his Presence and Consolations, gives thee to understand that the more thou advancest towards the end of thy Life, the more thy Pains which are to succeed one another will be sharp and pressing; that then the Devil, Enemy to thy Salvation, will come to redouble with Fury his Efforts and Temptations, convinced that the Time which remains for him to make thee suffer Shipwreck of thy Salvation, if he can, is but very short: In fortifying then thyself in the Lord, by the Virtue of his Grace, which he came himself to communicate so abundantly to thee, accept still from his Hand the Buckler of Faith to cover thee from the mortal Darts which the Devil and Nature, ever averse to Sufferings, shall throw at thee. The Love of thyself and of this transitory Life, of which God desires thee to make an intire Sacrifice by the Acceptance of Death, is a violent Temptation thou must continually fight against.

Remember that Faith teaches thee thou must suffer during the Course of this Life; that

that the Cross is here thy Inheritance; that *St. Aug.*
 thy Vocation to Heaven is grounded on thy
 Resemblance with thy Saviour; that thou
 must suffer and die with him, before thou
 art associated with him in Glory; that the
 Inheritance of the heavenly Father is given
 to those who pass their Life in Sufferings and
 Pain, after the Example of his own Son;
 that in order to be of the Number of the
 Inhabitants of his Kingdom, one must as-
 cend there by the different Degrees of Trials *Macc. xiii.*
 and Afflictions, and bear faithfully till Death
 the Martyrdom of Penance.

Behold, my Soul, what Faith teaches,
 and what thou hast heard a thousand and a
 thousand times; it lays before thee the Ne-
 cessity of dying to thyself, to prepare thee *Colloss. iii.*
 to submit to the Sentence of Death pro-
 nounced against all Men; it orders thee to
 chastise thy Body by the Austerities of Pe-
 nance, before thou comest to experience the
 Bitterness and Rigors that follow an impe-
 nitent Life; it teaches thee to incessantly
 fight against the Love of this deceitful World,
 in order to better bear the Separation from
 and Loss of it at the Hour of Death; yet
 what Credit hast thou given to this Divine
 Voice, which ought to be the Rule of thy
 Conduct? What Conformity of thy Actions
 with those holy Truths which thou hadst
 been so often instructed in? On what Occa-
 sions hast thou made it thy Business to die *St. Amb.*
 to the World, thy Lusts and Passions?
 Wherein hast thou made it appear that thy
 Affections were weaned from the false Com-

*Isa. xlv.**St. Aug.*

forts of, this World, which has, so often seduced thy Innocence? Didst thou not deserve to experience that Surprise and Confusion the Worldling is in, when he is seiz'd with a violent Sickness, threaten'd to lose, in a few Moments a Life passed in Pleasures, and sees Hell open before his Eyes ready to swallow him up? Ah! lamenting in the Sight of God for having given Ear to a sensual Nature, and deceitful World that allured thee with Love of Pleasures, and Aversion for Sufferings, acknowledge in those which encompass thee the Mercy of God in thy Favour; confess thy Happiness in being Heir to the Cross of Jesus Christ for which thou hast shewn so little regard; thank this Divine Master that he is still pleased to repeat, in thy Favour, those salutary Lessons to which thou hast always refused to give Ear, that he is careful to make thee his Follower by the Evils he inflicts on thee, associate thee to his Pains by those of the Sickness he sends thee, make thee have some Conformity with the Original he proposed thee on *Mount Calvary*, and imprint in thee the Image of his own Death.

John. vi.

O my Jesus, Author of my Faith, render aimable to my Heart those Truths which seem so difficult, and which it cannot reduce to Practice without the Assistance of thy Grace: Enlighten, dear Lord, my Faith on the Necessity and Advantages, of Sufferings to which I have so great a Repugnance; convince me that in condemning thyself to the Dolors of the Cross, in order to change
the

the Sentence of eternal Death which the Divine Justice had pronounced against me, *St. Bern.* thou didst not pretend to exempt me from *Serm. i.* suffering and dying after thy Example, but *in Cant.* to mitigate and sanctify my Pains by the Virtue of thine; convince me that as thou hast open'd Heaven for me by thy Sufferings, I must bear my Share of them with thee in order to enter into that celestial Habitation: That as thou hast made thy Death the way that leads to those happy Mansions, I ought *St. Aug.* to accept mine as thou didst, in order to arrive there. Thy Testimony, O my Jesus, is faithful, since thou art Truth itself; thy Words, how hard soever they may seem to Flesh and Blood, are Life-giving to the Soul: The Law of Sufferings and Death, which thou orderest me to undergo after thee, is to be follow'd by a happy Immortality. Can *John vi.* it be then, that I should hesitate to submit to it after thy Example, in order to procure myself eternal Life? Is it possible, that after having submitted myself to it by the Engagement of my Baptism, I should renounce it in these Moments of happy tho' severe Trials.

Ah! my Soul, a lively Faith is known by Works; this Virtue requires not only a Submission of Mind to the Truths it teaches, *St. Greg.* but likewise a Docility of Heart to reduce *M...* them to Practice: If Faith be necessary to come to God, one must be obedient to his Commands here in order to possess him hereafter; it's deceiving oneself, to be satisfied *James i.* with believing the Beatitude which the Gospel

annexes to the Crosses of this Life, and not to bear them with Alacrity when God is pleased to send them.

2 Cor. xiii.

St. Basil.

Hom. de

Grat. Act.

St. Aug.

P. Dam.

Judge then now, my Soul, of thy Faith by the Disposition thou art in with regard to the Evils which environ thee; examine if those who are Witnesses to thy Complaints, Murmurings and Impatience, may not say with Truth, that thy Faith is very remiss, seeing it does not appear to be animated by that Charity, which perfects it in order to Salvation. Do not say, it is impossible to suffer in Peace, when Sufferings are so long and violent, since all is possible to thee with the Assistance of God's Grace, altho' the Trial of Virtue, in a suffering Christian, is a new Language always opposite to that of Nature. A Man cannot have true Christian Patience in the Afflictions of this Life but inasmuch as his Faith is lively; the Body cannot remain firm in Suffering, if the Love and Fear of God be not deeply ingrafted in the Heart: If thou be dejected in thy Sufferings, and fearest to Excess the Death that is to put an end to them, thou thereby provest thyself a weak Christian. For to believe a Heaven, and be unwilling to enter into it by Sufferings and Death which are the Way that leads to it; to hope that an eternal Rest and Joy will succeed a few Days of Pain, and refuse to bear it with Patience; to flatter thyself that thou lovest God, and to shun at the same time his Possession and Presence, which the Tribulations of this Life are a Means to procure us; is this to be a faithful Follower

Follower of Christ, who would not triumph over Death, but by accepting it on the Cross? Is this to imitate that Divine Master, who daily desiring to finish his Sacrifice on that Instrument of our Salvation in order to return to his heavenly Father, gave us to understand, that we ought to continually sigh after him, and chearfully accept all the Evils that may hasten our Re-union with him.

Ah! my Soul, if the Promises of a God so magnificent in his Rewards are not sufficient to stop thy Complaints in thy Sufferings, let the Fear of the incomprehensible Dolors and Pains, with which his Justice threatens thee after Death, raise thy Courage and support thy Patience. If thou wilt not be submissive to his Orders; if thou hast a Repugnance to, and endeavourest to throw off the Cross of Sufferings which he himself lays on thee; if thou refusest to bear, for the few Days thou hast to live, the Title of Disciple of his Son by thy Resignation and Patience in the Evils he sends thee, thou wilt incur the Danger of being excluded from his Inheritance, and condemn'd, as a sensual and effeminate Person, to incomprehensible and endless Pains. St. Aug.

Hast thou ever well consider'd, my Soul, the Rigor of these eternal Torments, the Remembrance of which would be enough to make a Christian bear with Patience all the Evils of this Life? In order to give thee some Idea of them, tho' but very faint and imperfect, imagine to thyself that if all the Sickness and other Pains which Men St. Hier.
suffer

St. Chrys.
See 34.

suffer in all Parts of the World were center'd in thee, thou wouldst judge them pleasant and delightful in Comparison of the Torments which the Damn'd suffer in Hell.

Besides, the very Idea of the Death, which we are all to undergo, is a sensible Image, which the Goodness of God gives us of Hell, to the end we may avoid becoming the Inhabitants of that Place of Horror. As soon as the Soul is separated from the Body, it's no more than a Carcase, the Sight whereof is horrible, and the Presence insupportable to all Men; in the Grave, where it is laid, it becomes a Prey to Worms and Serpents which devour all the Substance of it: As soon as the Soul of an impenitent Sinner departs this World, and appears in the Sight of God, she is incontinently rejected as an Object of Horror and *Anathema* for all Eternity, and the infernal Abyss to which the Divine Justice condemns her, is a Place of incomprehensible and innumerable Tortures: Let us add, that in this Ocean of Pains (where the Body, risen from the Dead at the end of the World, will partake of and even increase the Torments of the Soul) there is not one Moment of Rest or Intermiſſion: That both are there buried in horrible and eternal Darkness; always overwhelm'd with a mortal Sadness, in bitter Groans, violent Agonies, and a furious Despair of ever seeing the end of their Misfortunes; in a word, every Part of the Body and Faculty of the Soul finds in Hell its Torment which is in itself extreme, and
without

St. Theresa

without the least Mixture of Sweetness or Consolation.

Ah! my Soul, if the very Reflexion on the numberless and terrible Chastisements which the Hand of God exercises on the Damn'd seizes thee with Dread and Fear, in order to avoid them let the Remembrance of their Duration animate thee to make good Use of the short and slight Evils which thou sufferest, and with which the Divine Justice is willing to be here satisfied.

If it is certain that the Number of the Torments, which the Reprobate endure, is not known but to God alone, it's equally certain, that to measure their Duration is also impossible, seeing the Number of Years which they are to last is infinite. Since it is more than seventeen hundred Years, which *St. Greg. Dives* begs for a Drop of Water to quench *in Job.* the Ardor of the Thirst which devours him, he has not as yet been able to obtain it, and is still without Hopes of ever finding any Body that will afford him that Comfort: This Cup of God's Anger, of which his Justice makes the Damn'd to drink, is inexhaustible and always full of Bitterness; their Condition is a Life of Punishment, an Immortality of Torments, an endless Death, and an Eternity of Pains for Soul and Body. *St. Paulin. Epist. 40.*

Is not this enough, my Soul, to engage thee to accept, from the merciful Hand of this same God, the Chalice of Salvation which he presents thee by thy Sickness, and of which he tempers the Bitterness by the Remedies he permits thee to make use of, and

and much more by the Hope he gives thee of avoiding, by the Pains of this transitory Life, the eternal Punishments of the other? Is there any room for thee to hesitate on the Choice thou art to make? Oughtst thou not to subscribe with a good Heart to the Judgment of Mercy that God exercises by the Evils with which he afflicts thee? Is there any Infirmary, Sickness, Pain, that thou oughtst not to suffer with Patience and Courage, because they are a Means to deliver thee from the Torments of Hell? I perceive, my Soul, that the Apprehension thou art in of that Place of eternal Regret, whereof the dark and devouring Fire will never be extinguish'd, where the Damn'd Souls become an everlasting Victim and Sacrifice to the Indignation of a God justly provok'd; I perceive, I say, that this Apprehension engages thee to supplicate his Mercy to preserve thee from that Place of Horror and Despair, being ready, sayst thou, to satisfy his Justice in Purgatory, provided he puts an end to the Pains thou sufferest here, and which thou imaginest to be unparallel'd: But know, that the Pains that we are to undergo in the other Life are incomparably less supportable than the most cruel Torments we can form an Idea of in this World; that the Fire of Purgatory is more rigorous and sharp than the Sufferings of all the Martyrs, and that there is no Proportion between the Pains thou sufferest here, and those which thou consentest to suffer in Purgatory; as well because Sufferings can-

not

St. Amb.

St. Anselm

not be long, if they are violent, as also because that God punishes our Faults but slightly in this Life, in View of the Merits of our Saviour, and that his Mercy moderates here below the Decrees of his Justice which fully exercises its Right in Purgatory.

Convinced then, my Soul, of these Truths, impose Silence on Nature when it shall dare complain; in saying to thyself; alas! if without complaining I cannot bear the Heat of a Fever or the Violence of my Pains, *St. Bonav.* what shall I do when encompass'd with the devouring Flames of Purgatory and overwhelmed with the Dolors which are there to be suffer'd? Is it not much better for me to leave this Prison of my Body, acquitted and discharged from all Debts owing to the Divine Justice, to which I may make Satisfaction for my Sins by suffering with Patience and Resignation, than to see myself detain'd, after Death, in the frightful Dungeon of Purgatory, there to expiate without Mercy, and according to Rigor, even the least Fault of my Life. Raise therefore, my Soul, thy Thoughts towards Heaven, to beg of God Strength to bear with Patience these momentary Trials which are soon to be follow'd by an everlasting Rest and Joy, let those that are Witnesses of thy Sufferings know by thy Submission and Patience that *Ecccl. xviii.* thou beholdest them with the Eyes of Faith, and judgest of them as all the Saints did; and as Jesus Christ himself judgest them necessary to Salvation, do thou receive them from

from the Hand of God, as the most singular Favours.

Iſa. xliii.

By making ſo good a Uſe of thy Faith thou wilt be rewarded even in this Life; for ſeeing thou haſt borne with Patience, ſhall thy Saviour ſay to thee, the Evils which I judged to be ſalutary to thee, at the Hour of Death, which is the time of the moſt violent Tribulation, I will come myſelf to deliver thee from it by the Virtue of my Grace; I will declare in thy Favour againſt thy Enemies, and will put them all to Flight before thee; be thy Pains ever ſo great, I will give thee Strength to bear, and even to triumph over them.

C H A P. XII.

Exerciſe of the Hopes of a CHRISTIAN in Sickneſs, to raiſe the Deſires of his Heart towards Heaven, and to fortify his Courage in his Pains, in View of the eternal Happineſs of which they are the Seed and Price.

*St. Aug.
Ser. xxix.
de verbis
Dominicæ*

O MY Soul, if Faith is a powerful Motive of thy Submission to the Deſigns of God, his Goodneſs is the ſolid Foundation of the great Hopes he gives thee, not in regard of this World, which he forbids thee to love, but in regard of Heaven which

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he commands thee to make the Object of all thy Vows and Prayers: Be not sensible then but to the great and inestimable Riches he promises thee there; forget the Evils thou sufferest by the Remembrance of the magnificent Reward which will be the end of them; raise thyself above thy Senses, in order to taste the Delights of the celestial Inheritance; endeavour to enter there by the Desires of thy Heart, and secure to thyself the Possession of it by Patience in the Tribulations of this Life, which is a sure way to it: To be admitted into the Society of Angels and Saints; celebrate with them an eternal Feast; be a Spectator and Witness of the Glory of a God; reign with him for ever; see, without Curtain or Veil, his Divine Essence; enjoy a happy Immortality; be no more Subject to the numberless Miseries that overwhelm us, and see ourselves enrich'd with all manner of Good. What do I say, O my God, it's thy Spirit alone that is capable to comprehend and declare the Excellence of thy House, and the Happiness of those who inhabit it; no Figure, no Comparison can give us an Idea worthy of its Magnificence: It's written, that the Eye never saw, the Ear never heard, and the Heart of Man never conceived, what God prepares for those who hear and love him. It suffices thee then, my Soul, to know that he shews himself to his Elect in the Kingdom of Heaven; opens all the Treasures of his Wisdom and Power in their Favour; admits them to the Participation of his

St. Greg.
Mag. Hom.
xxxvii.

St. Aug.
Lib. xxii.
de Civit.
Domini.

*Isaiab li.**Apoc. xx.**St. Greg.
M.*

his Glory and Delights; enters into Society with them; fills them with his Light; penetrates them with his Truth; communicates his Perfections to them; makes them bear a Resemblance with himself, and crowns them with everlasting Joy. All the Occupation of the Saints is to be associated with Blessed Spirits, to publish the Praises and Mercies of the Lord: In this Habitation of Joy and Delights, they do not experience the Cravings of Hunger and Thirst, since they are fill'd with God himself who is the living Bread, and inebriated with that Torrent of living Water of which he is the inexhaustible Source; in this Place of Peace, Light and perfect Satisfaction, there is neither Pain, Sickness, Temptation, nor Darkness to suffer, or fear; Death itself, which is the Term of all our Miseries here, and the most severe Punishment of Sin will be banish'd from Heaven for ever, and relegated into Hell with the Devil who is the Author of it.

Ah! my Soul, if this faint Portraiture of the celestial *Jerusalem* makes thee sigh after the Possession of it; if that alone appears aimable to thee, if thou hast an ardent Desire for it, why dost thou not say often to thyself, in order to divert thee from Attention to thy Pains, and stop the Complaints of a Nature averse to Sufferings: How vile and despicable the Earth appears to me, when I behold Heaven! What an Illusion to seek for happy Days here below, since it is impossible to find any! What an Inchantment.

to.

to promise oneself the Sweets of Rest and Peace in the bitter Abode of a Life of Banishment and Exile! How long, O Lord, will the Fatigues of my Journey last? When shall I arrive at the Term of my Hopes? When wilt thou introduce me into that delightful Land which thou hast promised me? When shall I be received into thy House? When shall I see myself among the Number of its Inhabitants? O charming Habitation! O fair Day of Eternity! O my dear Country, present thyself to my Eyes, and may the Lord inspire me with a new Ardor to possess thee.

St. Aug. Ser. xxix. de verbis Domini.

Thoma: a Kemp. Lib. iii. c. 48.

Such is, my Soul, the Language of a Christian animated by Hope: And as thou art become a Coheir with thy Saviour by Baptism, he ascended into Heaven, to open thee its Gates and prepare a Place therein for thee. But this same Saviour declares, that none shall enter that Kingdom but those whose Names are written in the Book of Life; and as he himself did not think proper to enter that Habitation of Glory, but after having been sacrificed on the Altar of the Cross, where he suffer'd the most cruel Pains and ignominious Death, so he requires that those who are his Followers should pass thro' great Trials, by partaking of his Death and Sufferings. As he has made the Instruments of his Passion the finest Ornaments of his Triumph in Heaven, so he will have thee, in order to be received there, to carry in thy Hand the Laurels of the hard-disputed Victories

Apoc. vii.

Victories which thou shalt have gain'd over Sufferings and Death.

*St. Aug.
Tract. xii.
in Joan.*

He is pleas'd to let thee partake of the Merit of his Sufferings, that thou mayst be a Partaker of the Glory which he enjoys; but he will have thee first to apply these Merits to thyself by imitating him in his Pains. It is on this Condition all the Inhabitants of Heaven, whose Happiness thou now envie'st, have enter'd there.

St. Leo.

Render then, my Soul, everlasting Thanks giving to Jesus, that he has strengthen'd thy Hopes for Heaven by the Virtue of his Sufferings; made thee enter, by Sickness, into the Way which leads to his holy Mansion, and open'd the Gates of it for thee in visiting thee with Tribulations: Ask him the Courage necessary to bear them with Patience till Death; and to willingly consent to the Dissolution of this Body that deprives thee of the clear Vision of a God, who is now the Object of all thy Hopes, and will be that of thy eternal Happiness hereafter. No Man, whilst living on Earth, says he, shall see me; I will exclude him from my Presence, and he shall always be a Stranger with regard to Heaven, as long as he be united to this sinful Body which retains him on Earth. Being in myself a pure Spirit, Flesh and Blood, terrestrial and corruptible Eyes cannot behold my Glory; you must be reform'd and renew'd on the Example of Jesus Christ to possess my Kingdom; you must be new-modelled on his Divine Image,
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in order to see the Splendor and Beauty of his Person: If the Grain is not cast into the Earth, if it dies not and rots not there, it cannot grow up and bear Fruit; if the Body be not now consumed with Pain and Rottenness, it cannot become spiritual and glorious at the Day of our Saviour's coming. *John xii.*

You must then, my Soul, lose in this World this vile and corruptible Body, in order to find it again full vested with Glory in the next; and as it is only by the Pains of Sickness, and by Death, it perishes and is destroy'd, chearfully consent to its Dissolution, in order to see it one Day rise glorious and incorruptible. If the Infirmary of our mortal State makes Nature sad at the very Thoughts of its Destruction, let Confidence in the Promises of God be a Motive to thee to banish Sorrow from thy Heart and wipe away thy Tears; let thy Faith often remind thee of that Truth so proper to console us on our departing this World, that the Grave annihilates not the Substance of our Body, which we so much love, but only destroys its Mortality, to render it capable of enjoying the Glory of God, in Company of the Saints in Heaven. *St. Cyp. Epist. ad Tyb. St. Aug. Serm. xxxii. de verb. Apost. D. Chrys. Hom. xxxiv. in Mat.*

After such formal Assurances of the Advantages of a Christian Death, calm then, my Soul, thy Uneasiness and Pain in View of those thou must undergo to come to God; let it not be said, that both Angels and Men see thy Indifference for the Riches of Heaven, and that thou wouldst willingly consent to lose

Pet. Chrys. lose them, if it was permitted thee to always live upon Earth. Be not seen to shed so many Tears for the Pains thou sufferest, whilst thou sheddest so few for the numberless Sins that made thee so often lose the Grace of God, and the Right to his Inheritance. Remember the Lord in thy Sufferings, be they ever so violent; and the Hopes thou hast of the everlasting Consolation he prepares for thee, will encourage thee to suffer them with Patience and even with Joy. Think of the Millions of Saints Men and Women now in Heaven, who supported by the same Hopes as thine, have bore with Courage the most acute Pains and cruel Torments. O! how little we suffer, said they, and how great is the Reward that is promised us: Come Crosses, Afflictions and Death with all your Anguishes; your Wounds will not only be slight, but even favourable and salutary to us, seeing they will be the Source of our Happiness, by conducting us to God, after whom we incessantly sigh.

Heb. xi.

Yes, my Soul, God's Appointment must be submitted to; we must sow, during Life, in Pain and Sorrow, to reap at our Death in Joy and Glory; we must accept and bear with Courage the hardest Trials in order to be judged worthy the Possession of a God; we must pass thro' the Darkness of the Grave, to shine bright with the Blessed in Heaven. Complain then no more of thy Sufferings, since they are necessary to put an end to thy Exile and advance thy Happiness; complain

complain no more of seeing the daily Decay of this Body whose good Plight was always fatal to thy Salvation. Thou wert commanded to attenuate it by the Rigors of Penance, in order to secure thyself Heaven, of which the Gate is so narrow, and the Entrance so difficult; but thy Love for this miserable Life has always made thee to use criminal or dangerous Managements and Precautions for its Preservation. What Goodness of a God to supply for thy Cowardise and Effeminacy! He strikes this sensual and delicate Body, he attenuates, wastes and consumes it by the Dolours of Sickness, that he may favourably receive it at the Hour of Death, and cloath it with a happy Immortality.

*St. Maxim.
im. & St.
Amb.*

St. Bern.

Cease not then to testify thy Gratitude to him in spite of the Repugnance and Rebellion of a Flesh which cannot easily consent to its Dissolution. Be not afflicted that thou still retainest an Affection for this perishable Life, even when thou consentest to make a Sacrifice of it to the Lord, in order to procure thyself his Kingdom; nothing is capable to destroy that natural Love which Man has for Life, but the Grace of God and Hopes of his Rewards will give thee Courage to overcome it. The Merit of a Christian's Victory, over Sufferings and Death, is raised by the Repugnance he has for them: It's this Repugnance and Rebellion, which the Sentiment of Pain produces in the Flesh, that makes the Perfection of Virtue in a

St. Aug.

*Idem.
Serm.
xxxiv.*

*Idem.
Serm.
clxxiii.*

Christian

*D. Thom.
Aq.*

Christian Soul: Jesus Christ, who thro' Mercy had taken our Nature with its Weaknesses, would feel the same Repugnance, at the Sight of the bitter Cup of his Passion, in order to fortify thee against the Troubles of human Weakness, to quiet thy Uneasiness on the sad Events of Sickness, to quell the Rebellion which arises from the Bitterness that attends it, and to teach thee to raise thyself above thy Senses, when the Question is to obey God's Orders, be they ever so hard and afflicting to Nature.

Rom. viii.

When then the Terrors of Death shall strike thy Mind and make thy Eyes sorrowful, cast immediately thy Heart upon Jesus, and think of the Victory he gain'd over Death in accepting it on the Cross. He is the God of the Living, and not of the Dead; his Omnipotence, who made this our Divine Head to rise from the Grave in order to raise him to Heaven, will raise thee from it in a little time, as being one of his Members, to reunite thee to him, and make thee Partaker of his Glory: He has often reiterated this Promise to thee; he has even given thee a particular Right to a glorious Resurrection, by feeding thee with his adorable Flesh and making thy Body his Habitation. The Life-giving Spirit which thou hast received in Baptism, and the living Bread of his Body which thou hast now eat, has communicated to thine a Seed of Life and Immortality, which will vivify it upon the Day of his coming: But as the time that precedes

precedes his Return, may be compared to St. *Aug.*
the Winter which spreads the Image of Death
upon the Trees and Grain cover'd in the
Earth, so thy Body must be hid therein to
the last Day, that it may then appear with
Jesus Christ vested with the Glory he him-
self enjoys.

Look then, my Soul, on Death, of which the
Thoughts are so frightful to Nature, not as an
Extinction of this Flesh, whose Dissolution
thou so much fearest, but as a Preparation for a
Change and Reformation like unto the glorious
Body of our Saviour; look not upon it as an
Enemy thou oughtst to fly from and have
an Aversion to, but as a Friend who comes
to ease thee of the heavy Burthen of thy
Miseries, and to pilot thee into the Harbour
of an happy Eternity; go by thy Desires to
meet this Deliverer, receive it both as a Pas-
sage to the eternal Life which is promised
thee, and as a Sleep from which the Voice *Ps. cxxvi.*
of the Lord will awake thee in a short time;
exert often thy Faith and Hopes on this
Truth of the Resurrection of our Bodies:
Yes, I know, oughtst thou often to say,
that my Saviour, who is living, will raise me
at the last Day; I believe my Jesus, who has
overcome Death by his Resurrection, will
make me overcome it by raising me at the
end of the World; I believe that then I
shall be cloath'd with this Flesh and Skin *1 Cor. xv.*
which I now so much fear to quit, and of
which the Separation seems so difficult to
me; I believe God will gather together all
I the

Job. xix. the Parts of my Body, tho' consumed by Pain and dispersed by Rottenness; I believe he will reunite them and bring them to Life by a Miracle of his Omnipotence. Behold, these are my Hopes, they shall always lodge in my Heart; the Word of God is the infallible Surety of my Hope, and the Food he has given me of his Flesh is a Pledge of the Resurrection of mine.

Mat. xxii. Relying on the formal Promises thou hast given me, O Lord, to make me an Inhabitant with thee in Heaven, and there to render me like unto the holy Angels, I esteem myself happy to be call'd out of this World: Finish then by Sufferings the Destruction of this Flesh which is to rise again and die no more; humble my Bones to the Dust of the Grave, seeing thy Word is to raise them to Life one Day, in order to replenish them with Joy: Hasten in my Favour the coming of thy Kingdom, which will fully satisfy all my Desires, make me enter, as soon as possible, into that perfect Adoption that will secure my Salvation, and consummate my Happiness: Destroy this House of Earth and Dirt that stops me from and suspends the Possession of thy Inheritance: Tear this Veil which hinders me from seeing thy Glory; operate for me, as soon as possible, this Renovation of Nature, and reform my vile and despicable Body according to the Splendor and Beauty of thine.

2 Cor. v.

But who am I, O my Saviour, to now speak to thee the Language of the Just, after

ter having so long behaved like a miserable Sinner? It belongs only to those, who after thy Example, have look'd upon Life as a painful and necessary Evil, wean'd themselves from it by the Contempt they always shew'd for its Advantages, and sought in the Rigors of Penance the Means to shorten it: It belongs to them to accept in Peace the Pains which attend it, because it delivers them from the Servitude of Sin, and procures them the Liberty of the Children of thy Kingdom, after which they always sigh'd: It belongs to them, I say, to behold Death as the Object of their Desires and the End of their Hope: It belongs to them to lift up with Confidence their Eyes towards Heaven at the Hour of Death; to expect with a filial Fear that terrible Day of thy coming; to ask thee to be introduced into the Presence of God thy Father, and to be made Partakers of the unspeakable Delights thou enjoyest thyself at his Right-hand; to preserve their Bodies, which they willingly give up to the Earth, in order to render them, at the last Day, Partakers of the Glory which thou art to put their Souls in Possession of. *Psaln xv. 33.*

Once more, who am I, that presumes to animate myself, as if I were of the Number of the Righteous, against the Terrors of Death? Summon'd in a little time before thy dreadful Throne, ought I not to fear to be there judged according to the inordinate Love of this World, that criminal Attachment to its Comforts, that Attention to satisfy the

Desires of a delicate and voluptuous Flesh, that Coolness and Indifference for every thing which belongs to thy Service, and that Ardor to please and serve this wicked World?

Mat. xxv. Have I not deserved to hear pronounced against me, at the Hour of my Death, that thundering *Anathema* which banishes for ever the slothful and sensual from thy Presence, and not to see my Body raised at the last Day, but to be cover'd with an eternal Reproach and condemn'd to the Torments proportion'd to the unlawful Pleasures which I so eagerly pursued?

Apoc. xviii.

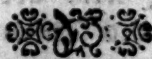
Ah! my Jesus, penetrated with the deepest Sorrow for having so often offended thee, I hope thou wilt not permit that I should experience the Effect of that dreadful and fatal Resurrection: Remember it has been given thee to be the sovereign Judge of my Doom for all Eternity, because thou hast render'd thyself, by thy Abasements and Sufferings, a Saviour full of Tendernefs and Bounty; and it's in Quality of Saviour of my Soul I address myself to thee with Confidence.

St. Cypr.

However criminal I must confess myself to have been, I hope thou wilt not despise the humble Prayers of a Sinner who has Recourse to thee in his Afflictions; that thou wilt still open the Bosom of thy Mercy, and not let eternal Punishment succeed the Pains I now suffer; I know thou lovest me, not only as the Work of thy Hands, form'd after thy own Likeness, but as the Fruit of thy Sufferings and Price of thy adorable Blood.

So

So I hope, that being my God and my Father from my Mother's Womb, thou wilt be my Protector and Sanctuary at the Hour of my Death; I hope thou wilt preserve my Soul from the Rigor of thy Judgments, and that applying the Merits of thy Death to her in departing this World, thou wilt conduct her safe into thy Tabernacles, where after having placed her on thy Right-hand and made her Partaker of thy Glory, thou wilt reform this vile and corruptible Body to the Resemblance of thine. Behold, my Jesus, all my Hope; as thou thyself hast inspired me with it, be likewise my Support and Consolation in this painful Condition to which thou hast reduced me; inspire me with Joy and Acknowledgment at my Departure out of this World; indemnify me for all the Advantages I am going to lose with my Life; inspire, engage me to make a voluntary Sacrifice of it to thee, in order to possess the everlasting Inheritance thou has promised me, and of which I have received the Pledge in the august Sacrament of thy precious Body and Blood.

*Psalm xxi.**Ps. cxviii.*

C H A P. XIII.

Exercise of the Charity of a CHRISTIAN in Sickness, in order to make him find Joy in his Sufferings, by looking on them as a new Mark of the Love GOD for him; as his bearing them with Patience is a solid Proof of his Love for GOD.

ya. lxiii.

*St. Aug.
Lib. x. c.
27. Conf.*

ICANNOT, O my God, think on the innumerable Favours I have received from thee in the Course of my Life, and of the incomprehensible Riches thou promisest me after Death, without assuring thee of my sincere Attachment and Love: Unhappy am I, for having been so tardy in loving a God who deserves to be eternally loved. O Beauty always ancient and ever new! O Bounty sovereignly aimable! I deplore the time which I have given to the Love of this World; I consecrate to thine alone the few Days I have to live, and ardently wish to bless and love thee everlastingly.

I confess that I am unworthy to be loved by thee; as for thy Part certainly thou deservest I should love thee with all the Powers of my Soul. O Charity, who art my God! Set me all of a Fire, and enflame me with thy Divine Love; give me what thou commandest me; for without thee I cannot fulfil the Precept of thy Love; infuse a-new into my Heart that precious Gift, which thou now
with

with so much Justice requirest of it, and of which I owe thee the just Tribute all the Days of my Life: For what hast thou not done to entirely gain to thyself this ungrateful and unfaithful Heart? Thou hast loved me first, since thou lovedst me before all Ages; thou hast loved me so far as to strip thyself of thy own Grandeur, and cloath thee with my Nothingness; thou hast loved me so far as to condemn thyself to the Death *Gal. ii.* of the Cross, and there spill thy Blood to reconcile me to thy Father, and restore me to the Right of his heavenly Kingdom. What do I say, sweet Saviour of my Soul? thy excessive Charity has made thee overcome the Excess of my Ingratitude and Malice: The very time I renounced, by my Crimes, that celestial Inheritance which cost thee so dear; prophaned the holy Alliance of my Baptism which thou hadst seal'd with thy adorable Blood; the very time my Soul was threaten'd with an approaching Reprobation, for resisting the interior Solicitations of thy Grace, thou hast taken Pity of her Blindness and Miseries; as I withdrew from thee by Sin, thou didst draw near to me by Mercy; thy compassionate Tenderness render'd thee my Mediator with thy Father; thou hast opposed the Merit of thy Death to his just Vengeance; thou hast wash'd away the Multitude of my Sins by the superabundant Graces of thy Redemption.

None but thou, O my Saviour, art capable *St. Aug.* to love to so great an Excess: Must thou, *l. i. Conf.* after so many Favours, command me like-

wife to love thee? Must thou make it an indispensable Obligation, and even threaten to punish me if I fail in it? Ah! lamenting my long Infidelity to the so aimable Precept of the best of all Fathers, what shall I do, O my Jesus, to testify a Gratitude that has some Proportion with thy Benefits? What Proof of my Love shall I give thee in Acknowledgment of thine? What I can do is to accept with Humility, Patience and Submission the Cup of my Sufferings: But, O my Jesus, support me thyself by the Virtue of thy Grace; give me Courage to offer thee, as a Mark of my Love, what is most dear to me in this World, which is the Life of the Body, that thou mayst judge by the Offering I make thee, of the Sincerity of my Affection for thee.

*St. Greg.
Mag.*

Thy Love, O my Saviour, is as strong as Death; it was this Love which made thee at the same time Priest and Victim on the Cross for my Salvation, and entirely destroy'd and consumed thee there; may the Graces thou hast merited thereon break the Chains which attach me still to the World, and make me, on this Bed of Sorrow, a Holocaust agreeable in thy Sight. The Repugnance of Nature, the Fears and overwhelming Sadness at the Sight of the cruel Death which was preparing for thee, could not diminish thy Zeal for the Interest of thy Father; the tender Love thou hadst for him, made thee submit to the Decree of his most rigorous Justice, in order to render thee my Surety at his Tribunal; make me partake
in

*St. Greg.
M.*

in my Sufferings of thy amorous Obedience in spite of the Rebellion of the Flesh; make me always remember the supreme Dominion *1 Pet. ii.* thou hast over my Life, as my Creator, and the Acquisition thou hast made of it at the Expence of thine, as my Saviour; grant me Grace to undergo Death, as well in Imitation of thy incomprehensible Charity for me, as thro' Homage to thy sovereign Grandeur; may I be, after thy Example, a Victim im- *St. Bern.* molated out of Love, that my Soul may obtain Mercy at thy Tribunal.

Thou hast said to me, O my Jesus, that there shall be much forgiven to him who shall have much loved: As there are no Debts comparable to, or Sins greater than mine, grant me Grace to love thee much, that I may receive an abundant Remission of them. *St. Pet.* All my Vows and Prayers to Heaven are to *Chrysol.* beg Grace to love thee, since if I love thee I shall be faithful to thy most rigorous Orders, accept the most hard Trials, bear easily and with a good Heart the painful Yoke of Sufferings, which without the Love of thee will always seem terrible and insupportable; in loving thee I shall possess thee within myself, prefer thee to all Creatures and even to my own Life; I shall suffer, not with Sadness, but with Joy, all the Pains of Sickness, and expect in Peace thy coming amidst the *St. Procop.* Anguish of Death itself. *Martyr.*

But, my Soul, is this Language so sincere in the Eyes of a God who sounds the bottom of thy Conscience, as it appears to be in the Sight of Men? Is it the Heart that forms

St. Barn.

these Vows and Desires, or is it only the Lips which pronounce them? Ah! after having had so little taste for Sufferings; what do I say, after having always had an Aversion to them, it is much to be fear'd thou dost not accept them in Imitation of and out of Love for Jesus, who for thy Salvation made them the Subject of his Joy and Delights; it is to be fear'd, that after having ever sought the Sweetness and Ease of this Life, thou shouldst complain of the Violence and Duration of thy Sufferings, which a Heart inflamed with the Love of God judges to be but very slight and transitory.

St. Barn.

Is this, my Soul, to have the same Sentiments for the Sufferings of this Life which our Saviour had for them? Is it to justly deserve the Name and Title of Disciple of so dear a Master? Is it to love thy Salvation, of which a suffering Life is a strong Presumption, seeing thy Saviour suffer'd on a Cross to merit it? Learn now that every Christian who has not the Spirit and Sentiments that Jesus Christ had for Tribulations, is not worthy of him, and that he incurs the Danger of being excluded from the Kingdom of his Father. That Opposition of Sentiments, that Irksomeness, Disgust and Aversion for a suffering Life, which Jesus Christ so much sought and loved, is in his Eyes a State of Indifference and Lukewarmness.

Mat. xxv.

Yes, my Soul; for as the greatest Misfortune of a Christian in this Life is to know Jesus Christ, and at the same time not to love him, so it is a very great Unhappiness for

for those, who being instructed in and convinced of the Advantages of Sufferings, refuse to receive them with an amorous Submission to his Orders. *St. Bern.*

O! how ungrateful and unthankful is a Heart, that makes a Difficulty to submit to the Obligation he is under to suffer some transitory Pains for his own Salvation, after that Jesus Christ has suffer'd such long and acute Pains to merit Grace to effectuate it: After that thou hast reconciled me, O my Saviour, to thy heavenly Father, shall I be ungrateful? After that thou hast spill'd the last Drop of thy Blood for me, shall I be counted a true Christian without Acknowledgment and Love for thee? Thou couldst not go farther in loving me; thou hast always treated me as a Brother and a Friend; thy Death is a pregnant Instance of thy Love; but the Indignity of the Torments of thy Passion is a Proof to me that thou hast carried it even to Excess. *St. Greg. M.*

Thy Love presses me, O aimable Jesus, it engages me to render thee on this Bed of Sorrow, to which thou reducest me, something like that with which thou hast prevented me on *Mount-Calvary*; thy Grace sollicitates me to renounce myself and this Life out of Homage to that unspeakable Love which made thee willingly die for me; it inspires me to resist the Lusts of the Flesh, to stifle its Complaints, to Sacrifice it to thee by Pains, to look upon Death, not as the End of the Evils of this Life, the Chastisements due to my Sins, and the way that is to lead me to thee, but as a Means which thy *St. Aug. c. iv. de Cate. Rud.*

thy Love presents me in order to give thee a Proof of mine. Create therefore in me a Heart tender and affectionate for thee alone; restore to me that Spirit which the Love of this World has always stifled in my Heart; renew in my Soul that Uprightness and Justice, which it had received from thee in Baptism, to the end that ceasing to turn towards herself, and this perishable Life, she may make a voluntary Sacrifice of it, that so she may tend only to thee who art her End and her Haappiness.

O! Grace of my Saviour, come and take Possession of my Heart, reign in it, by subjecting its Inclinations and Desires that it may have no other but to love a God who has so much loved me, and whose whole Law is fulfill'd by Love: For it's in Love that the supreme Worship I owe him consists; it's Love that constitutes the Characteristick of a true Christian; it's by Love that I shall become a living Victim and an Holocaust of an agreeable Odour in his Sight; that I shall appear with Confidence before his Throne, and that passing from this Earth to Heaven, I shall burn with a happy and eternal Flame.

John xvi. Father of Mercies, I shall never cease to ask thee, in the Name of thy dear Son, the Grace to love thee; he is himself, as eternal Truth, the Surety of the Promise he made me, to obtain from thee whatever I shall ask in his Name; and thou thyself, after having deliver'd him over to Death for my Salvation, will not, I hope, refuse me this Favour: No, my God, I shall never doubt of thy

thy Goodness towards me; I confess that thy Heart has always been in regard to me such as Jesus declared it to me; I have had numberless Proofs of thy Affection, all the Days and all the Moments of my Life are seal'd with thy Benefits, and the Favour thou hast done me to come into my Heart, by the Sacrament of thy Love, makes me hope that thou wilt not refuse me the Grace to love thee as I ought.

But, my Soul, wherein hast thou made St. *Aug.* hitherto appear that thou lovest God? We judge of the Quality of a Tree by that of the Fruit it bears: How can it be said that the Love of Jesus is deeply imprinted and rooted in thy Heart? What Meekness, what Patience, what Submission, what Courage hast thou shewn in thy Sufferings? These Virtues are the Fruits and Proofs of the Solidity of our Love for God: He will not have us to love him by Word of Mouth only; he is not satisfied with Acts of Love that are more in the Tongue than in the Heart and Conduct, it is his Will we should prove it by our Works and Actions.

As Charity is meek, patient and pacifick, 1 *Cor. xiii.* can it be said that it perfectly possesses the Heart of a sick Person, who troubles the Peace of others by his continual Complaints, and gives not a moments Rest to those who are about him in order to assist him? Ah! my Soul, acknowledging and lamenting the Remissness of thy Love, think of Jesus, who in order to give Proofs of his, remain'd mute amidst the greatest Insults and most cruel Torments: Let the Remembrance of his Pains

Pains be then a Motive to engage thee either to the Silence which he kept in his, or at least to make appear by thy Words a certain Meekness, which is the most natural Language of Charity, so proper to gain the Heart, and support the Zeal of such as partake of thy Sufferings by their Care, Attendance, Watching and sometimes overwhelming Fatigues; and all that often out of a Motive of pure Charity. If the Violence of thy Pains and Vivacity of thy Temper, which has perhaps but too much appear'd; or if even the Want of Zeal or Attention in those whose Business it is to assist thee, or some hard and indiscreet Word which they drop, expose thee to some Motion of Impatience, incontinently lift up thy Heart to Heaven; reflect upon thy Sins with a hearty Sorrow, and beg God's Grace to preserve in thee that precious Peace of Conscience, and to make thee return Jesus Christ Love for Love, Pain for Pain, and Death for Death. Remember that every thing may contribute to the Salvation of those who love God; and that as his Sufferings proceeded from Love, the more thou partakest of the Bitters and Contradictions which he experienced in them, the more he will recompence thy Fidelity in following and imitating him: For he will make thee feel the Sweetness and Lightness of his Yoke which is not heavy and bitter but to a slothful and lukewarm Christian; he will make thee find more Joy in the Evils which thou sufferest, than thou hast had in the deceitful Pleasures thou hast so eagerly pursued in the World; he will make

St. Bern.

*St. Aug.
Serm. c.
de Temp.*

make thee consider thy Pains as a precious Baptism that extinguishes the Flames of Hell, and even those of Purgatory; he will make thee find in that amorous Union of thy Sufferings with his, powerful Arms against the Efforts of the Devil, who is sure of his Defeat and of our Victory, when he sees us fight against him under such a Head. *St. Leo.*

Incessantly ask thy Saviour, O my Soul, the Grace to ever love and thank him for all his Benefits and Gifts; continually raise thy Voice and Hands towards Heaven in order to obtain it, bend all thy Vows to the loving of a God who deserves to be sovereignly loved, and beseech him to vouchsafe that his Love may reign without End in thy Heart as his Glory is eternal in Heaven.

O Lord, who by the Excess of thy Bounty always surpassest the Merit and Prayers of those who invoke thee, infuse into my Heart the Ardor of thy Love; burn by its Fire whatever remains of human, terrestrial and carnal in me: May I live no more, O Lord, but by thy Spirit; may the Virtue of thy Grace wean me from both this World and myself, and make me to incessantly fight for thee and after thee: Grant that as the Strength of my Body shall diminish, that of my Love for thee may increase and improve, that it may compleatly extinguish whatever is still mortal in me, and make me feel that happy languishing of which the Royal Prophet speaks: In saying to my Soul, thy well-beloved draws near, mayst thou pine away and die for Love of him. May the Flames
of

St. Aug.

of the Taper, O my Jesus, that shall be put into my Hand at the time of my Agony, be to the Assistants an Emblem of the Ardor of my Love for thee: May they know that I wish to finish my mortal Life in loving thee, as thou thyself hast begun my spiritual Life by Baptism in giving me thy holy Love. Admit me, O my God, at my departing this World, among the Number of thy Elect, and put me in Possession of thy Inheritance. May I have the Happiness to say to thee in receiving it from thy adorable and paternal Hand: I now see what I believed; I enjoy for ever what I hoped for in my Life time, and embrace with all the Ardor of my Soul, the God who gave me Grace to love him.

C H A P. XIV.

Acts and Sentiments of a CHRISTIAN before the Extreme-Union, on the new Spiritual and Corporal Succours which JESUS CHRIST prepares for him in that Sacrament, against the Anguishes of Death and Assaults of the Devil.

2 Pet. i.
14.

BEHOLD, O Lord, the time of my Departure out of this World draws near. I perceive, by the Violence and Duration of my Sickness, that my Soul is going soon to quit this House of Earth which it has so long inhabited. Thy Mercy, attentive to

to and touch'd with my Condition, has instituted in my Favour a last Sacrament, of which the Virtue is to ease, and even cure my Illness, if thy Wisdom judges it expedient for thy Glory and my Salvation.

*Jac. v.
& Conc.
Trid.*

I do not deserve, O Lord, thou shouldst restore me to Health; the bad Use I made of it condemns me to lose my Life; but open in my Favour and bestow on me those Treasures of Graces which attend the holy and last Unction that thy Bounty ordains to be applied to my Senses, in order to repair the bad Use of them; re-establish me in my Innocence, relieve my Misery by the Virtue of thy Merits, strengthen and animate all my Powers to sustain the violent Conflicts which I am to undergo against Death and Hell.

Yes, my Saviour, I look upon this Sacrament as an universal Reparation of all my Life; I believe that the Grace of Extreme-Unction is a Complement of that of my Baptism. Cloath'd then entirely with thee; incorporated in thee; enliven'd by thy Spirit; consecrated in thee to God thy Father and mine; I ought, after thy Example, to employ only in his Service, and for his Glory, all the Powers of my Soul, and Faculties of my Body: I ought not to have lived but by thy very Life, which thou hast communicated to me in Baptism, and by following the Lights and Motions of thy holy Grace, and in rendering my Actions conformable to thy Will, that I might find myself, at the Hour of Death, enrich'd with a plentiful Harvest of

*Ex Conc.
Trid. &
Florent.*

of Good-works. But, Wretch as I am, far from having imitated thee by my Conduct, and faithfully corresponded with thy holy Grace, I too often behaved in opposition to thy Will, by following the Lusts of the Flesh, and Violence of my Passion; I have almost all my Life, grieved thy Holy Spirit; I have frequently been deaf to his Voice, in order to hearken only to the Voice of this corrupted World and my criminal Passions. I should have reason to fear that thy Justice would find in my Infidelities the Subject of my Condemnation and Perdition at my departing this Life, if thy unspeakable Bounty did not engage thee to descend a-new towards me in my Extremity, in order to replenish my Soul with thy holy Grace. Let her for ever thank thee, adorable Saviour, that thou vouchsafest not only to consecrate her still to God by the Unction of this last Sacrament, but also to apply the Merit of thy Good-works to her, and make her partake of the holy Use thou hast made of thy Senses during the time of thy mortal Life, in order to repair the shameful and criminal Use she made of hers by the inordinate Love of herself and other Creatures. It is by this Communication of thy Grace, O my Jesus, that the Excess of thy Mercy shines in so resplendent a Manner; grant me to join my Prayers with those of the Priest as often as he shall apply the Unction to the different Parts of my Body.

For which Purpose a more than common Piety and Devotion is necessary; a Sacrament

*Id. Conc.
Trid.*

*Eccl. in
Administ.
buj. Sacr.*

ment so important and profitable to my Salvation (since it's to consummate in me the Christian Life which thou hast given me in *St. Thom.* Baptism) requires, if possible, the Use of *Aq.* Reason and all the Presence of Mind one is capable of. Grant then to thy Minister, from whom I am to receive it, the Knowledge of my approaching End, and the Courage to give me Notice of it. Let him denounce to me the dangerous State of my present Illness, before it becomes incurable; let him convince me that the Sacrament of Extreme-Union is not a Sacrament of Death; that it is a Sacrament instituted by thee for the Benefit of both Soul and Body: Let him persuade me to receive it in time *St. Via.* as well for the Ease of my corporal Pains, as for the Relief of the Languors of my Soul: Let him explain to me all the Effects and Advantages of this Divine Remedy, in telling me, that it's the Consummation of a Christian Life and will cause in my Soul an Augmentation of Grace; that it will purify my Conscience from the Guilt of all the *Conc. Trid. Sess. xiv.* Sins I omitted in my Confessions thro' forgetfulness, that it will fortify my Mind against the Terrors of Death, the Temptations of the malignant Spirit, the Violence of Pain, and the Despondency of Nature: In telling me, that the Grace of this last Sacrament will wean my Heart from the Things of this World, apply the Merits of *St. Thom.* my Saviour to me, render me, at his Tribunal, an Object worthy his Complaisance, and there procure me the Happiness to hear *Aq. Dist. iv. Quæst. xxiv. Act. ii.* these

these comfortable Words : Come, Beloved of my Father, take Possession of the Kingdom which his Love has prepared for thee from the Beginning of the World.

Ah! my Soul, disabuse thyself of that false Persuasion that thou must soon die after having received this Sacrament of the Extreme-Union; for many have lived several Years after receiving it. Wait not then to the last Extremity, as the Lovers of this Life do who apprehend it more than they desire it, and whose wilful Delays till the Moment they lose the Use of their Reason and Speech, is often a criminal Neglect in them, since in so doing they tempt God, and contemn the Grace of this Sacrament.

Ex. Eod.

Conc. Trid. Wherefore, O my Soul, dispose thyself to benefit by so great a Succour, whilst thou art in thy full Senses. Call the Minister of the holy Church, who alone can administer it to thee according to the Institution of Christ; accuse thyself of the Sins thou mayst have forgot in thy Confession, and those thou mightst have committed since by Impatience in thy Sufferings; beg God's Grace to give thee a sincere Sorrow for them, call with Confidence on the Father of Mercies, unite thy Tears to the Blood of thy Saviour in order to obtain Pardon for them; manifest to him a Love without Reserve, in Acknowledgment of his Love for thee which is infinite; prepare thyself for his coming by the Acceptation of all the Evils that precede it, by a general Disgust to Creatures, and a holy Impatience to possess thy Deliverer;
order

St. Amb.

order all thy Senses who have been an Entrance for so many Crimes, and an Instrument for committing them, to dispose themselves to benefit by this Visit which the heavenly Physician is still pleased to make thee: For it is in Favour of a Christian indeed with these holy Dispositions, that this last Sacrament expiates the remains of Sin, and even the Guilt if there be any. Endeavour then, my Soul, to bring these Dispositions to this last sacramental Visit of thy Saviour, receive his Approaches to thy Bed in the Person of the Priest, with a Spirit full of Faith, Confidence and Conviction of the Advantages of his Visit; join thy Prayers to those which the Holy Catholick Church uses in the Administration of this Sacrament; beg of the Assistants to supply for the Defects of thy Capacity; and make it thy Request to the Ministers of God to offer for that Intention the holy Sacrifice of the Mass; remember above all, that if the Church does not command thee to lie in Sack-cloth or Ashes, before granting thee the Unction of the sick (as she formerly ordain'd her Children to do) remember, I say, that she declares that the Spirit of Penance is a Disposition always necessary to partake of the Effects of this Divine Remedy. So, my Soul, at every Unction that shall be applied to the Parts of thy Body, think with Sorrow on the bad Use thou hast made of them, and on the Goodness of thy Saviour who instituted this Sacrament in thy Favour; say to him

2 Paral.
xxxiv.

Ex tribus
Pontifical.
Rom.

Job xvi.
& xlii.

him with the Sentiments of a contrite and humble Heart:

At the Anointing the EYES.

O my Jesus, whose pure and chaste Eyes have shed so many Tears, to expiate all my unchast and curious Looks, grant me Grace to join a Torrent of Tears to thine, and to the Effusion of thy Blood, of which the Virtue is applied to me by the holy Unction that is made on my Eyes.

At the Anointing the EARS.

WASH, O my Saviour, the Impurity of my Ears by the Purity of thine. May thy Mercy which pardon'd thy Enemies the Impieties and Blasphemies they pronounced against thy adorable Person, forgive me all the Sins I have committed by hearing an infinit Number of vain, flattering, unprofitable, flandering, impious and unchast Discourses.

At the Anointing the NOSTRILS.

PARDON me, O my Jesus, the Sensuality of my Smelling. I unite the bad Scent of the Remedies and of my sick Body, to that which thou hast felt on *Mount-Calvary*, by the Infection of the Bodies executed there, in Expiation both of the Pleasure I have taken in sweet Smells and of the Aver-

sion

sion I always shew'd to the Hospitals, and Houses of the Poor.

At the Anointing the MOUTH.

O my Jesus, whose most pure and holy Mouth never open'd but to bless thy Father, denounce his Orders and preach that Penance necessary to Salvation; I beseech thee thro' the Gall and Vinegar that were given thee on the Cross to drink, to pronounce on me the general Pardon of the Sins I have committed by my Excesses in eating and drinking, and by my vain, backbiting, injurious, impious and dissolute Words.

At the Anointing the HANDS.

I beseech thee, O my Jesus, thro' the cruel Pain which thou hast felt, when thy Divine and bounteous Hands were pierced with Nails, to pardon all the Crimes of which mine have been the Instruments by my Thefts, by the Outrages I have done to my Neighbours, and by the criminal Touches with which I have defiled both my Soul and Body.

At the Anointing the FEET.

O my Jesus, whose adorable Feet have gone so many weary Steps in order to withdraw me from the criminal Paths, where mine have so often carried me; I humbly beg Pardon for all the sinful Steps I have made, and of which thou hast been Witness;

ness; in washing my Feet with thy Blood, cleanse my Soul by thy Grace of all the mortal Stains it has contracted.

At the Anointing the REINS.

I beseech thee, O my Jesus, thro' the Innocence of thy holy Life, to forgive me all the shameful Excesses of mine; may the Life-giving Water which flow'd from thy Side, extinguish in me the Fire of Concupiscence, which I but too often kindled within myself: Grant that thy precious Blood, in which I place my whole Confidence, may be to my Soul and Body a sacred Bath to purify them from the numberless Stains with which I had cover'd them.

CH A P. XV.

Acts and Sentiments of a CHRISTIAN after the Extreme-Union in order to reap the whole Fruit of this Sacrament, by the Application he makes of it to all the Powers of his Soul and Body.

Pf. xxx.

BE for ever Blessed, O my Jesus, for all the Marks of Love and Mercy thou hast given me in this Life, of which I shall retain an everlasting Remembrance: Give me Grace, O Lord, to publish them for ever; grant me to sing thy Praises in Heaven, in Acknowledgment of all the Benefits

nefits which thou hast heap'd on me. The Conviction of my numberless Infidelities, the Abuse of so many repeated Favours, gave me room often to fear that thou hadst rejected and despised me; but thy ineffable Bounty has strongly reunited me to thee: For by the holy Unction that has been applied to me, thou hast caused a new Infusion of Grace in my Heart; thou hast descended a-new on me; taken away the Cause both of my Shame and Despair; destroy'd what remain'd of the old Man in me; thou hast communicated thyself to me, by a full Application of thy Merits, that I may appear, after my Death in the Presence of thy Father, an Object of his Esteem and Love.

*St. Aug.
Joshua v.*

Once more, O my Jesus, be thou blessed and glorified for ever and ever, that thou hast given me Grace to work my Salvation, and vouchsafest to remain with and console me to the last Moment of my Life. May the Extreme-Unction, which I now received, make me so to partake of the Merits of thy Death, that nothing may appear more in me of that Life of Adam which so often caused my Disgrace and Ruin. Suffer not that I should come out of thy Wounds in which thou hast now buried me; may the rest of my Life be hid in thee; may the Holy Catholick Church, to which I have consecrated the first Moments of my Christian Being in Baptism, receive the last Gasps of my Life in the Sentiments of perfect Submission to her Doctrine: May that holy Mother that adopted me from my Birth for her Child, and always fed me in

*Collof. iii.
iv.*

her Bosom, acknowledge me for such at the Hour of my Death, may her Arms in which I have been received by Baptism, put me into thine by Means of the Sacrament of Extreme-Uction, in order to see the Splendor of thy Glory; may thy Kingdom crown the Treasure of Graces which thou hast hitherto bestow'd on me. In order to obtain it I cheerfully renounce this carnal and sensual Life according to which I have but too long lived. I freely condemn to Death and Rottenness this Body of Iniquity, of which I but too much follow'd the Passions and inordinate Motions. I willingly say to my Soul: Since it has pleas'd God to pardon us for the bad Use we made of our Senses thro' Malice or Frailty, let us use them no more but in holy and pious Practices; since Jesus Christ is come to form a-new his Image in me; since that heavenly Man has replenish'd me with his Grace, in order to communicate his Life and Sentiments to me, I will no more bear the Image of the terrestrial Man, I will no longer appertain to him, nor behave, for the future, in a secular and human Manner.

Habac. iii.

Rom. vi.

Ecccl. li.

Yes, O my Heart and Mind, thou shalt have no more Thoughts nor Desires but for eternal Happiness: Yes, O my Mouth, thou shalt no more be open'd but to publish the Praises of God, and the Greatness of his Mercies; my Ears, ye shall no more hearken but to what shall be told you of his Love and Kingdom; my Eyes, you shall look no more but towards Heaven, where the Good-

ness

neis of God is ready to admit you; my Hands, you shall for the future touch only the Crofs of Jesus, which is to conduct us thither; my Feet, you shall remain on my Couch out of Obedience to the Orders of the Divine Justice, whose Will it is thou shouldst no more descend from it; my Flesh, thou shalt be fix'd to the Crofs of Pain, where Jesus ordains thee to die with him.

St. Amb.

But, O Lord, in consenting that my Body should return to the Earth, of which it is form'd, grant that my Soul may be received into thy Hands which have redeem'd it; in consenting that my Body should be cover'd with Dust and hid under the Shades of the Grave, grant that my Soul may enjoy the Light with which thou illuminatest thy holy Mansion; it is towards it alone that all my Vows do tend. Pardon me, O Lord, for having so long lost Sight of it; Pardon me for having done so much for the Earth, and so little for Heaven. I confess that the Forgetfulness and Indifference I always was in with regard to its Happiness, induce and animate the Enemies of my Salvation to dispute now with me the Possession of thy Inheritance: Thou art, O Lord, Witness of the Snares they lay for me in the short Way that remains to come to thee. It is true, thy Mercy has rais'd in my Favour, by the last Unction, a formidable Bulwark against their Efforts; it is true, this Sacrament furnishes me with victorious Arms against the Devils who seek my Destruction. I render thee, O Lord, my most humble Thanks

Pf. xxvi.

Pf. xvii.

102.

for that thou hast granted me this powerful Succour; and I earnestly beg my Friends and Acquaintance to do the same. But, my Jesus, if thou continuest not till Death thy Protection against them, my own Frailty will make me again fall into their Hands; grant me then, O Lord, the Grace of persevering to the End; thou art faithful, I own, but thy Fidelity in not letting me be tempted beyond my Strength, does not free me from the Fear of not corresponding faithfully with thy Grace, and of my losing Courage in that frightful Trial I am soon to undergo against Death and Hell.

1 Cor. x.
13.

The time of this hard Conflict draws near; I see myself already struggling with them: A Deluge of Evils overwhelms my Body; they succeed one another with a Violence superior to my Strength, and my Soul is encompass'd by the Devils, who promise themselves to seize on her the Moment of her Separation. They stand around me like furious Lyons, and try different Means to destroy me: If they see me stedfast in the Belief of the Truths which thy holy Church teaches, they endeavour either to make me lose Confidence in thy Mercy, by reminding me of the Number and Grievousness of my Sins; or to make me presume too much on it by the Remembrance of the Virtues, tho' very imperfect, which I have practised.

St. Greg.
Hom. xxiv.

St. Laurent.
Inst.

Who but thou alone, O my God, canst deliver me from the Snares of my Enemies? Men give me already Notice by their withdrawing

drawing from me, that I vainly placed my Hopes in them, seeing none of them has it in his Power to preserve me from the Dangers that environ me; as for my Part, I am but feeble, poor and infirm. It is then of thee, O Lord, who art Witness to my Weakness, I beg the Succour I am now in need of, to sustain with Courage the Assaults of my Enemies and become victorious over them. It is then to the Throne of thy Mercy I lift up my Eyes, and from which I expect the Salvation of my Soul: The Remembrance of so many Falls from which thou hast preserved her by thy Grace, and thy Promise to be attentive to her Necessities in the sorrowful Day of Tribulations, supports and animates the Confidence which thou orderest me to place in thee alone.

Job xix.

In Effect, to whom but to thee, O my Jesus, can I address myself, since thou art my whole Hope and Strength in the afflicting Condition I am in? Is it not thou to whom is left the Care of poor and afflicted Man? Is it not the Effect of thy Bounty to lend thy helping Hand to those who are in Pain and Tribulation? Rise then quickly to come to my Succour; put a stop to the cruel Pursuits of the Enemy of my Salvation, by powerfully assisting me with thy Grace; break his Arm full of Violence and Malice by the all-powerful Strength of thine; and force him to desist from the unjust Design he has to ruin my Soul. I declare, she belongs to thee, and not to him; I loudly renounce his Empire over and over again,

*Psalms
xxviii. &
lxxiii.*

tho' I have been unhappy enough to submit myself to it on several Occasions. I will die by thy Laws, O Lord, as I began to live under them. I confess thee my Creator and Redeemer; resume all thy Right over me; make thy Grace rule and govern over all the Powers of my Soul and Body; let that Usurper of thine Inheritance retire confounded and stripp'd of the Pretensions he still claims over me; let him no more glory in the Advantages I had given him by my Disobedience, seeing thy Mercy has forgiven me; let him not authorize the Violence he would exercise on me, by saying, thou hast abandon'd me to his Fury, that I am to expect no Succour from thee, and that no Power is capable to preserve me from his Hands, since thou hast environ'd me with Strength, by the Extreme-Union, in order to sustain his Assaults, and hast been pleased to take me under thy Protection in sealing my Body and Soul with thy own Blood for the Security of my Salvation.

Psal. xv.

But, my Jesus, the Favour I beg of thee is to preserve me till Death, by the Virtue of thy Grace, in the way of Salvation. Suffer not that the implacable Hatred of the Devil, should shake my Constancy or make me ever depart from it. Thou knowest, O Lord, that the Height of his Joy and Desires, would be to withdraw me from the State of Grace where thy Mercy has placed me. In thee alone have I placed all my Hope, because thro' thee alone I shall be able to overcome all the Temptations of that malignant Spirit:

He

He will redouble them in those Moments that he sees me most overwhelm'd with Evils; he will then endeavour to excite trouble and inordinate Fear of thy Judgments in me, in order to make me lose that Confidence I have in thy Mercy. Cease not, my Jesus, to be Witness to his Arts and my Frailty, to the end thou mayst be ready to lend me thy Assistance. Vouchsafe, I beseech thee, to grant it me to the last Moment of my Life, since the Devil will not then cease to seek my eternal Perdition. Remember, Divine Saviour, the Alliance thou hast made with my Soul in Baptism; forget not the Promise thou hast given her in admitting her into thy Service, of being her God and Protector against all the Insults of her Enemies; permit not that after having made me so often feel the Effects of thy Mercy in the Course of my Life, I should at the end of it be deliver'd over to the dreadful Executioner of thy Justice; suffer not that the Moment I shall be summon'd before thee, should be that of my Banishment for all Eternity; include me not in that terrible Sentence that will exclude the Sinner from thy Presence, in the fatal Instant that he shall appear before thee: All my Fears, O my Jesus, reunite when I consider thy Justice: I tremble at the very Thoughts of these thundering Words: Retire, from me, ye Cursed; my whole Concern is to lose thee, because I conceive that to be separated from thee, is the Height of all Misfortunes. So, my Jesus, reject me not,

Ps. lxiii.
Deut. ix. xxvi. & xxi. 8.
Mat. xxv.

K. 4. when.

when I shall present myself before thee; let me not suffer Shipwreck in thy Sight; let me not become the Object of thy eternal Vengeance: But when thou shalt exercise on thy dreadful Throne the Function of Judge of the Living and the Dead, remember the Title of Father and Saviour of my Soul, which thou hast taken on the Cross; remember that her Justification has cost thee infinite Labour, and the Effusion of thy Blood: Suffer not that the great Mysteries of thy Abasements and Death, which thou hast operated for my Salvation, and of which there is no Acknowledgment in Hell, should be ineffectual: Apply the Merits of thy Suffering to me in these Moments so proper to consummate the Work of my Redemption. Save my Soul thro' the Virtue and for the Glory of thy holy Name: Have some regard to the extreme Affliction I am in; hearken to the Cries of my Heart and Faith; be attentive to the Voice of my Sighs and Tears, know by the Weakness of my Hands, Eyes and Cries, which I cease not to lift up towards thee, the Violence I suffer, that I may not succumb under the Efforts of my Enemies. Grant, O Lord, that the Day of thy coming which is, for many, a Day of Tribulation, of Horror and Darkness, may be, for me, a Day of Confidence, Light, Benediction and Peace; release not my Soul from the Prison of my Body but in order to bless thee for all Eternity. This Separation seems hard and is repugnant to me, I grant, but animate me thyself by thy Grace and

Isaiab
xxxviii.

Psalms
cxli.

and Example, O my Jesus, to submit to and accept it, seeing Death will, I hope, unite me to thee for ever, and associate me with thee in thy Inheritance.

C H A P. XVI.

Last Penance of a CHRISTIAN in Sickness by the humble Acceptance he makes of the Death to which GOD condemns him, and of the Circumstances in which it shall please GOD to take away his Life.

THOU offerest me from thy Cross, O my Jesus, the fatal Cup of Death; thou declarest to me that I must depart this *Dent.* World in a little time; seeing the Sentence *xxxi. 16.* which condemns me to it is irrevocable, I adore and submit to it with all my Heart, whatever Repugnance Nature, that cannot easily consent to her Dissolution, may shew for it. I belong to thee by so many Titles, that it would be to want Reason and Religion to oppose thy Orders, or even complain of them. I acknowledge that my Life is not so much my Property as a Depositum which thou hast confided to me; it is all due to thee, since it is the Price of thine: Dispose of it then as sovereign Master of my Doom which is in thy Hands; exercise the Right of Life and Death which thou hast *Sap. xvi.* over me. I deliver myself to thy all-powerful

ful Arm in order to bear the Effort of it by the Dissolution of my Body: Make appear what thou art at the Expence of thy Creature, who owes her whole Being to thee: Burn, break, destroy this unhappy Flesh, Enemy to thy Sanctity by its inordinate Desires; spare not this vile Body, that has been so long the Object of Self-love, and the Instrument of so many Sins; finish me by reducing me to Dust: I offer myself to thy supreme Majesty in order to be sacrificed to thy Glory: I desire to honour, by the Loss of my Life, the Immortality of thine: Make, O Lord, of my whole Person a Burnt-offering for the entire Accomplishment of the Designs of thy Love and Justice on me: Immolate my Body by the Pains of Death, and my Soul by the Agonies of its Separation; thrice happy that the voluntary Oblation I make of my Life, may partly serve at thy Bar for the Expiation of my Sins, and make me avoid the Pains of Hell, in Comparison of which mine are but Phantoms.

Philip. ii.

But, O Lord, my Soul in the Agitation she is in, and in the Sorrow which presses her at the sight of her approaching Separation from my Body, raises up towards thee her dying Voice; be thou then attentive and favourable to her Prayer.

Rom. v.

I confess the Justice of this Sentence of Death pronounced against me a miserable Sinner; but in submitting to it, I beseech thee to diminish the Fear that attends it, and with which thou piercest my Heart in Punishment of its Rebellion. Shew me thyself

self the Greatness of the Evils from which
 Death is soon to deliver me, since it is im-
 possible for the most eloquent Tongue to *St. Aug.*
 express it; enliven my Faith and Hope in
 View of the Immensity and Eternity of the
 Treasures which thou hast acquired for me
 by thy Death on the Cross, and of which
 I cannot take Possession, but by accepting
 Death on this Bed of Sorrow: Inspire me *St. Greg.*
 with Courage to depart, without Regret, out *Mag.*
 of a World which is nothing but a Revo-
 lution of Men born only to die; into which
 I came myself weeping; where I have al-
 ways seen myself encompass'd with Misery,
 Labour and Pain, and which I must neces-
 sarily quit amidst the Pangs of Death. May
 this Life, of which the vain and deceitful
 Charms have seduced my Soul and gain'd
 her Affection, become insupportable to me;
 may I lose it in Punishment of the bad Use
 I made of it, and so put an end to Sin
 which has so often reign'd in me. I believe
 it is thro' Sin that Death which threatens
 me, and the Evils which environ me, have
 enter'd into the World: I believe it is this
 same World, which I so loudly renounced in
 Baptism, and in the midst of which I pro-
 mised a thousand and a thousand times to be *St. Chrys.*
 faithful to God, that has render'd ineffectual
 my Resolutions and Promises, because it is but
 Snares, Temptation and Scandal; because it
 always is an Enemy to God, and opposite
 to his Service: Can it then have any thing
 that may render it still aimable to me? Has
 it any Object worthy my Attachment to it, *St. Leo.*
 and.

and ought I to so much fear quitting it? Has it not still the same Illusions that have so often robb'd me of the Innocence of my Heart? Has it not still the same contagious Air which has so often infected it; and should not the Remembrance alone of the sad Shipwrecks it has made me suffer engage me to quit it without Regret, in order to be revenged of its Perfidy?

*Greg. M.
in Job.*

If I pass from the Corruption of this World to its Duration, what is more short and frail! Is it not common to see those hasten to the Grave, whose Birth had drawn them out of nothing but a little before? Does not the Earth continue to take back again, without Distinction of Age, what it had lent us to constitute our Being? Can I be ignorant that Death which is the Punishment of Sin, successively seizes on all Men, and that none of them can exempt himself from it? Have I not seen my Neighbours, Friends and Relations go before me but a little while ago, and what have I done, and what do I still every Day do, but hasten to the same Term where they are arrived? Am I not convinced by myself of the Nothingness and Frailty of Life, which passes in vain Disquiets and Uneasiness; of which the Course, as swift as that of a Shadow, gives me Birth and brings me to Death almost at the same time? Don't I know, by my own Experience that Death, which always follow'd me close, has laid a thousand Snares for me by the different Distempers with which it has so often attack'd me?

Naz.

Orat. 11.

How

How comes it then to pass that I am troubled, and that I so much fear the Loss of a Life which the deplorable Series of Miseries, Weaknesses and Languors that attend it, makes rather a continual Death than a true Life? How comes it that I so much apprehend the end of my Days, of which the Number has always increased that of my Sins? How comes it that I make it appear to those who are Witnesses of my Departure out of this World, that I am as sorry for it as a Heathen who has no Hopes of a Resurrection? That it is with Grief I see the end of my Sufferings? That I don't behold Heaven but with Eyes full of Tears? And that being on the Borders of the Land of Promise, where the Christian Soul enjoys a perfect Peace, eternal Rest, and an Abundance of all Sorts of Blessings, I still retain an Affection for the dismal Place of my Exile, and that I cannot prevail upon myself to leave it but by force?

St. Basil.
in Joan.
c. 14.

Ah! my Saviour, open the Eyes of my Faith that I may see my Blindness and Folly, in loving so much a Life, when the numberless Afflictions, with which it abounds, draw Tears from the Eyes of those who but consider them ever so little. Take away from me this low and groveling Heart, that is still full of the World and its fleeting Vanities, whilst thou callest it to take Possession of thy Kingdom: Destroy in me this mean and servile Inclination which makes me still love the Bitterness of the Prison of my Body, at the very time thou shewest me the Advantages

Cypr. Lib.
de Mort.

St. Aug.

St. Pet.
Chrysost.

Rom. viii.
v. 21, 22,
Et 23.

Cypr. de
Orat.
Dom.

Ambr. de
bon. Mort.

vantages and Sweetness of my Deliverance: Take Compassion, O Lord, on my Weakness, which is inconceivable: What! I am convinced that all Creatures sigh for the Manifestation of thy Glory which is one Day to make ours, and shall I fear Death that is to be the Passage to it? What! I have ask'd thee a thousand and a thousand times the coming of thy Kingdom, and shall I now fear that it will happen? What! I know that Death is the Object of the Vows and Desires of a true Christian, because it makes them pass from the Region of Darkness to the bright Habitation of the Living; and shall I still look upon it as the most formidable and cruel of all Evils? What! after having shed so many Tears for the unhappy Condition to which Sin has subjected me, shall I fear seeing myself deliver'd from it, that I may come to God? What! I am convinced that Life, after a great deal of Labour and Sufferings, brings us at length to Death by the Law of Sin, when on the contrary thro' the Grace and Mercy of God, Death makes us pass to Rest and Immortality; and shall I still hesitate to receive it as one of his greatest Benefits? What! I know that the Saints, of whose Happiness I desire to partake, expected with Patience and Joy the Moment of seeing themselves disengaged from the Chains of the Body, which indeed was not lawful for them to break, but which they endeavour'd to untie by Degrees by the Austerities of Penance; and shall I give all my Attention, and set all Engines to work

work to tie stronger, if I could, the Chains which prolong my Servitude, and increase the Weight of my Misery? What? I feel that my Body pines away and consumes every Day, that it has this long while refused me its Services, and that those which I force it to render me, for the Ease of my Pains, irritate them; and shall I still fear to see myself got rid of so bad a Servant, and to break off Society with so afflicting a Companion? What! the Physicians have for a long time look'd upon me as a Man whose Cure is despair'd of, they have very often told me that my Distemper is without Remedy, and that having sure and evident Signs of Death in me, I ought every Day to expect it and prepare myself for it; and yet when I have any Intervals of Ease from my Pains, shall I still flatter myself that I may be cured?

Once more, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, Compassion of my Weakness; comfort my Affliction which is extreme; come to my Succour in the overwhelming Agitation I am in; free me from the Necessities which environ me. I am become burthensome to myself, when I consider that my Heart, tho' it lifts itself up sometimes towards Heaven, thro' a Desire of seeing thee, yet it stoops again towards the Earth drawn by the Love it has for this Life. Give me the Courage to wish, as soon as possible, the End of these Conflicts which endanger my Salvation; and seeing thy Mercy has prepared me, by so many Relapses into Sicknes, for my Departure.

*Thoma. a
Kemp. Lib.
iii. c. 48.*

Departure out of this World, and so often inspired me by thy Grace to expect in Peace that fatal Moment, why then do I still look back upon it? Why do I love the Chains of this Body that retain me Captive? Since I have so perfect a Knowledge of the Miseries with which the Life of Man is overwhelm'd; seeing I feel by myself the Straits to which they reduce it; seeing I groan so long under the Weight of Pain, of which Death is to take away all Sentiment from me, how comes it then that I so much fear its Approaches?

St. Aug.

Why do I apprehend the Sight and Entrance of the Harbour, where all our Afflictions and Pains end? How comes it that I hesitate to get over this Passage that will be the term of my Course, Temptations and Conflicts?

Ah! my God, it is from thy Bounty I expect this Victory so opposite to Nature; it is only by the Succour of thy Grace, that my Soul can consent to the Dissolution of this vile Matter, which it animates and loves too much. Apply then to me, my Jesus, the Merit of thy Death, in order to surmount the Frights of this which threatens me; destroy in me this Apprehension that Nature prompts me to, and which the Love of thee orders me to fight against; make me partake in my Sufferings of that perfect Submission thou shewedst in thine; it is thou alone, who encouraging me to follow thee my Master and Pastor, wilt deliver me from this inordinate Fear, so dangerous to Salvation. Above all, O Lord, become not thyself the Subject of my Fear: For I own that.

St. Aug.

that I less apprehend Death than the Consequence of it: The Fear of the Exactness and Severity of thy Judgment, surpasses the Sentiment of the Miseries that encompass me, and from which Death is soon to deliver me: Become not, I say, O Lord, the Subject of my Fear, by permitting me to be too much terrified by the Number of my Sins, and the Rigor of thy Tribunal, where I am soon to appear; shew not thyself to me as a revenging God, but as a tender and a charitable Father: Make me forget the Sins of my Youth which always come to trouble the Peace of my Heart: Replenish it with thy Grace in order to calm its Disquiets; reproach me no more with my past Folly; but tell my Soul, that she will not be confounded at thy coming, and that thy Mercy will be everlasting in her Favour: Banish from her that fatal Fear that causes Trouble and Despair at the Approaches of Death; but preserve in her that filial Fear attended with Sentiments worthy thy Goodness; animate her Confidence in thee, and make her repeat often in her most violent Pains: I fear not to die, because Jesus is my Resurrection, my Hope and Life: I fear not Death that is to summon me before his Tribunal, because I have to do with a good Master, who, always inclined to Clemency, wills my Salvation, and not my Perdition. He was propitious to the Prayer of the good Thief, whilst nail'd to the Cross; he gave him an Assurance of Paradise at the Moment of his Death; and it is in this same Mercy

*Tertul. de
Test. Ani.
cap. ix.*

Isaiab liv.

*St. Amb.
& St.
Chrys.*

Mercy I place my Hope in this Day of my greatest Affliction; it is thy Mercy and Grace, which penetrating my Heart with a salutary Compunction, will make me find Favour at thy Tribunal, will procure me, before I appear there, an entire Detachment from this Life so full of Dangers, will inspire me with a Disgust for the Consolations of this transitory World, will pour on my Evils that Unction so proper to render them aimable, will make the Approaches of Death easy to me by the ardent Desire it gives me to see the Lord, and will make me say often in the Anguish of my Departure: How long wilt thou tarry, O good Jesus? When wilt thou come to let me know the End of my Exile? When wilt thou break the Chains of my Captivity? When wilt thou reunite my Soul to her heavenly Spouse? When will she be received into Abraham's Bosom? When shall I be Witness of thy Glory? When shall I possess thee as the Object of my eternal Happiness? Have I not been long enough upon Earth? Have I not often enough run the Risk of my Salvation? Wilt thou leave me longer in the Uncertainty of my Doom? My Soul groans in Expectation of the ultimate Effect of her Adoption; she is press'd and labours with the Desire of seeing thee; how long will her Pain and Torment endure? When wilt thou conduct her to that Place of Refreshment, Light and Peace which she pants after? When wilt thou operate, in her Favour, that happy Change which she so ardently wishes? When wilt thou

St. Bern.

*St. Aug.
Sol cap.
xxiii.*

Tobia iii.

thou free her from the Tumults of this World? When wilt thou take her out of *Job. xiv.* the Prison of the Body to put her in Possession of thy Inheritance? When wilt thou hide her in thy Bosom, there to enjoy the eternal Rest which can be only found in thee?

Ah! my God, seeing all my Strength exhausted, and the Grave open before the Eyes of my Mind, I expect with Impatience to see myself freed from the Chains of Death and Dangers of Sin: It is with Sorrow I behold myself still a Slave to that Vanity to which all Things are subject here below; *Rom. viii.* this vile and deceitful World is insupportable to me; to live in this Habitation of Death, of which the Shadow covers already my Eyes, is disagreeable to me beyond Comparison; since then, O Lord, the Ax is already laid to the Root of the Tree; since the Sword that is to finish my Days, is already lifted over my Head; since Life begins to forsake me, that it is almost spent, and that my Body tends to the Corruption of the Grave; since Death and I are within a Hair's Breadth of each other; since I no more expect but the Stroke that is to immolate me to thy supreme Majesty, in order to consummate my Sacrifice, and unite me to thee for ever; incontinently pronounce *St. Aug.* on my Flesh the Sentence of her Dissolution; hearken no more to her Desires always contrary to thy Will; give her to understand, that she seeks in vain to be cured

of her Evils, since her End approaches, and that in a little time she must be reduced to a handful of Dust: But as for my Soul, tell her she is call'd to thee who art her Father and her God; hasten in her Favour the coming of thy Kingdom, which is her Inheritance and Country; introduce her, as soon as possible, into that Place of Abode inaccessible to the Miseries of this Life, wherein are tasted, without Disquiet, the ineffable Sweetnesses of thy Consolations. Have no regard, O my Jesus, to the Agitations of this Flesh which rises against the mortal Pains that oppress it; but render my Soul, by the Virtue of thy Grace, steadfast and constant in the Submission she owes thee: Give me Courage to despise Death, which thou hast suffer'd on the Cross, in order to animate me not to fear it; at least grant me to receive it with Thanksgiving in View of the great Benefits of which the Virtue of thine makes me hope the Possession; accept in odour of Sweetness the little Life that remains in me, and the Offering I have so often made thee of it in the Course of my Sufferings; sanctify my Death by the Merit of thine, in order to render it precious and agreeable in the Sight of thy Father. Unite the Sacrifice I offer thee of my Soul and Body, unworthy and imperfect as they are, to the Oblation thou hast made of thy all-holy Life, and of thy pure and spotless Blood. It is in this Union that I desire to give up my Soul into thy Hands, penetrated with

St. Bern.

*St. Greg.
M. Hom.*

with Sorrow and Repentance not to have preserved that Innocence which I had received by my Baptism.

I am willing, O Lord, to render my Repentance publick, by confessing with a Taper in my Hand my Disobedience to thy Commandments, and to the Vows that attach'd me to thee. I confess that I have often broke the holy Union which thy sanctifying Grace had form'd between my Soul and thee. I disfigured thy Likeness in me by reassuming the old Man, as the Maxims of the World suggested. This is, O Lord, what afflicts, torments, and rends my poor Heart. Defer, I beseech thee, still for some Moments, the Execution of the Sentence of Death which thy Justice pronounces upon me, as guilty of High-Treason against the Divine Majesty, to the end, that penetrated by thy Grace, with Bitterness and Sorrow for my past Strayings, I may make a general Reparation for it, and become worthy to meet thee, in leaving this World with that ardent Charity, of which the Light of this Taper is an Emblem and Representation.

St. Aug.

Adorable Majesty of my God, Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I dare present myself before thee with the Sweat of Death already on my Face, to ask thee still Pardon for all the Sins of my Life. Thou art Just, O my God, I adore and submit to the Equity of the Sentence of Death which I must undergo. Thy Mercy has several times deferr'd the Punishment I deserved for my Crimes; but it is in this Moment that thy

thy Justice is pleased to put it in Execution: Grant me Grace to finally satisfy for them by the Pains of Death, and to end my Life in the Kiss of thy Love. Suffer, O my Jesus, that in order to continue in the State of Grace, and die in Union and Society with thy Father and thee; suffer, I say, that I invoke the Intercession and Suffrages of the Saints, with whom I am united by so many Ties: This Deluge of Evils that overwhelms and advertises me of my Departure out of this World, is for them the most favourable Occasion to address their Prayers to thee in my Behalf.

C H A P. XVII.

Recourse of a CHRISTIAN, in his Agony, to the Intercession of the Saints, to beseech them to obtain for him the powerful Succour which he stands in need of, and to receive him into the eternal Tabernacles.

O MY Jesus, only Saviour of my Soul, sole and all-powerful Mediator of the Redemption of Men with thy Father, thou whose most pure Blood rises in my Favour before his Throne, and speaks efficaciously for me, how thou strengthenest my Confidence in this fatal Conflict, I must soon undergo, in giving me at the Tribunal of thy Justice

Justice as many Intercessors and Patrons as St. *Leo*. there are Saints that environ it. They desire my Salvation with a perfect Charity, and only wait my calling upon them to come to my Assistance: Their Intercession will be always a formidable Bulwark against the Enemy of my Soul: Not satisfied to have protected her in thy Presence by their Prayers during my Life, they are willing still to take care to receive her at the Hour of Death, and to conduct her into the happy Place of Abode which they inhabit. St. *Greg. M.* St. *Maxim.*

Lamenting, O Lord, for not having follow'd the Examples of Virtue which they had left me, I shall beseech them to offer thee their Good-works, in order to supply the Deficiency of mine, and I hope that their Merits, grounded on thine, will render thy Mercy propitious to me. St. *Amb.*

Blessed *Mary*, Mother of my Jesus, it is thou, as Queen of Angels and Saints, whom I shall first call to my Succour in this furious Tempest, where I must suffer Shipwreck of every thing, except, as I hope, my Soul's Salvation, which thou hast so much at Heart. Seeing thou art the Channel of the Graces which God grants to Man; seeing thou art the Mother of Jesus, who has fully paid and satisfied for us, to his Father, by the Effusion of his Blood; seeing this Mediator of Satisfaction and Justice has received from thee this precious Blood, which is the true Source of our Salvation; seeing thy Solitude to apply to us the Merit of the same adorable Blood, makes thee so exactly attentive to our St. *Bern.*

3 Reg. ii.

St. Bern.

our Necessities, and gives thee so great a Desire to procure us the Graces necessary to work our Salvation; I shall not lose Sight of thee in the extreme Want I am in of thy Assistance. My Trial is soon to come on, the Actions of my whole Life are to be canvass'd, according to Rigor, before his Tribunal; the Question will be, whether I shall gain or lose his Inheritance; the Sentence, that is soon to be pronounced, will decide my Doom for all Eternity: Seeing thy Throne is at the Right-hand of his, be there my powerful Advocate; use the utmost Diligence in my Cause; join thy Intercession to the Vows and Prayers that the holy Church, of which thou art the Emblem, addresses to God in my Favour: She supplicates him to replenish me with his Graces, to support me in my Weaknesses, and to fill me with Courage and Strength to overcome the Enemies of my Salvation; interest thyself for me to that Purpose with Jesus, and beseech him to deliver me from the Pains which I suffer, and from the eternal Death which I apprehend. Since, after thy Son my Saviour, I place all my Hope in thee, declare thyself my tender Mother: It is the Name he gave thee whilst he was on the Cross, and in the Arms of Death; adopt me for thy Child on this Bed of Sorrow, where I consent to partake of his Sufferings, and to die with him; render thyself propitious to me pursuant to his Recommendation of all the Faithful to thee in the Person of his Beloved Disciple, St. John. He could not chuse a Circumstance

of

of Time and Place more favourable than that of *Mount-Calvary*, where, in giving his Blood and Life for us, he honour'd me with the Title of thy Child; receive me then as the Inheritance which he left thee in consummating the Mystery of our Redemption; behold me with Compassion and Tenderness, calling to mind the last Words that my Saviour address'd to thee in order to recommend me to thy Protection and Care; think me not unworthy thy Adoption which will always be glorious and salutary to me, now that I bear a dolorous Resemblance with thy adorable Son: Thou remain'dst stedfast and constant at the Foot of his Cross, to be Witness of the mortal Pains he there incurred for my Salvation; obtain for me, I beseech thee, the Application of the Virtue of his Sufferings, in beholding mine; assist at my Death to procure me the Merit of that which Jesus has suffer'd for me. Offer to thy Son the Anguish with which thy Heart was penetrated in seeing him on the Cross, in order to supply the Grief with which mine ought to be pierced at the Remembrance of its numberless Offences, to ease the Bitterness with which my Soul will be fill'd at the Approaches of my last Agony; obtain, by thy Prayers, that she may find her Rest in the Sufferings of my Saviour, and that his sacred Wounds may be to her a Place of Retirement at the terrible Moment of her Separation from my Body.

Canst thou, Holy Virgin, refuse me these necessary Succours which it is easy for thee

L

to

St. Anselm

Eccles. in
Off.

St. Bern.

to procure me, thou, who hast carried in thy Womb the Incarnate Word? Wilt thou refuse to open for me the Bosom of thy Charity, which is the Refuge of Sinners, the Strength of those who Fight, the Health of the Sick, and Joy of the Dying? Be then my Reconciliation with God; be my Sanctuary in the Presence of my Judge; support me by thy Protection at his Tribunal; moderate the Rigor of it by thy Credit, turn not thy Looks from thy poor Child, who is in the greatest of Tribulations. The

*St. Basil.
sc. love.*

Holy Church has reconciled me with thy Son; but there is no Effort but what the Devil makes, there is no Snare but what he lays for me to withdraw me from that happy State, and render me an Associate of his Misfortunes. Behold, O my tender Mother, what causes Trouble and Disquiet in my Soul. Save her, I beseech thee, from the Hands of her Enemies; let her not suffer

St. Bern.

Shipwreck under thy Eyes, nor let the Devil triumph at her Perdition. I throw myself into the Arms of thy Mercy, I hope all by thy Mediation; hearken to my Vows and Sighs, consider my Groans and Tears; procure me, in departing this World, the favourable Looks of thy Son my Saviour, and engage him, by thy powerful Credit, to put me in Possession of the Glory which thou enjoyest.

*Idem.
Bern.*

O Glorious Patriarch *St. Joseph*, faithful Guardian of the Humanity of Jesus Christ, thou, who after having been the Comfort and Support of the Holy Virgin *Mary* in her Fatigues,

Fatigues, didst expire in the most happy Manner that ever Mortal did, in the Arms of Jesus and *Mary*, declare thyself my Defender, as I am now destitute of all human Succour; come to receive, in these precious Moments, my last Gasp; obtain the Grace for me to die like thee the Death of the Just, and guide my Soul in the Way to Heaven where thou inhabitest.

O all ye Saints in Heaven, whose Fidelity in loving God and Zeal in promoting the Salvation of Men, have made you Inhabitants of that happy Place of Abode, be, I beseech you, attentive to my Miseries: You who know by Experience the Frailties and Infirmities of human Nature, assist me in this sorrowful Condition I am in. You remember that the Holy Church, in seeing you persecuted for her Cause, and that of Jesus Christ her Spouse, begg'd of God in her Prayers, to support you in your hard Trials: Now that you enjoy the Reward of your Labours and Pains, think it not unworthy of your Glory to make Intercession for the Salvation of my poor Soul. Call to mind that Day of Jubily which my Conversion caused in Heaven, and may the Remembrance of that Joy of the Angels, which occasion'd an incredible Vexation to the Devils, render you attentive to the Snares they lay for me, to the Dangers that surround me, and to the Uncertainty I am in to come off Victorious. Employ, on your Side, all your Credit to obtain from our common Saviour the Grace to protect and sup-

James v.

2a. xi.

port me to my last Breath in the Way of Salvation. Be mindful of me in the Presence of the Lord, and offer your Prayers before his Throne in my Favour.

St. Hier.

I hope for this Attention and Succour from your perfect Charity with so much the more Confidence, that your Suffrages will have a happy Success at the Bar of my Judge, as he now sees me fortified by the Sacraments of the Holy Church, supported by her Prayers, honour'd by the Presence of my Saviour, made Partaker of his Sufferings, weaned by the Virtue of his Grace from this World which is going to perish for me, and in Expectation of the Execution of the Sentence of Death, which I accept with all my Heart in Satisfaction for the Sins of my whole Life.

St. Amb.

It is true, that to deserve to have you at the Hour of my Death the zealous Protectors of my Salvation, I should have been during my Life a faithful Imitator of your Virtues: But my Soul, pierced with the most lively Sorrow for its Infidelities in not corresponding with God's Grace and following your Example, dares still promise herself that you will have regard to her, and that the Sincerity of her Repentance will engage you to employ your powerful Credit in her Favour at the Tribunal of her Judge. Address then, I beseech you, your united Prayers and Intercession to him, and endeavour to appease his Justice by offering him the Merits of your Good-works for me.

St. Aug.

St. Chrys.

Give

Give me this last Mark of thy Charity, thou in particular, O holy St. *N.* whose Name I have the Honour to bear; preserve me always under thy Protection, tho' very unworthy of it. I confide in thy special Care over my Soul, as thou hast been given me in Baptism for a Patron. With Sorrow I confess how far I have been from living according to thy good Example; but obtain for me from the God of Mercies the Grace to imitate thy Patience in my Sufferings, a Humility like thine at the Sight of my Sins, and a perfect Submission in the mortal State to which it pleases God to reduce me.

O Glorious Archangel St. *Michael*, Prince of the heavenly Host, thou whom God has appointed Protector of the Faithful, come *Eccl. in* now to support and preserve me in the State *Off.* of Grace wherein his Mercy, I hope, has placed me: Thou art the zealous Defender of his Glory; it is thou who hast overcome, and even drove out of Heaven the Enemy of it; come to defend me from his Fury; oppose thyself to the Efforts of the Devil, fassle his Designs, preserve me from the Snares he lays for me in the terrible Way I am to pass from this Earth to Heaven; be Spectator of the Conflicts I undergo, and support me thro' that Zeal which animates thee, that I may come off Victorious; preside at my Death, receive my Soul departing my Body, assist her by thy Prayers before the Tribunal of her Judge, banish the *Apol. xii.* Devil from it who dares threaten to become there my cruel Accuser; suffer not that he

St. Amb.

should then find any thing in me that appertains to him, and with which he may charge me in that dreadful Moment; obtain for me the Grace to renounce all his Works, that he may retire dumb and confounded in his Pretensions; preserve me, by thy Credit, from the Place of Darkness, which this Wretch inhabits, and conduct me into the resplendent Place of Abode which the Goodness of God promised to our Fathers, that I may for ever bless him in Concert with the Saints.

O my good Angel, faithful Guardian of my Soul, charitable Guide of my Salvation, how often have I grieved thee in the Exercise of thy Commission over me! Far from following thy wholesome Advices; far from walking in the Way of Innocence where thou hast taken care to guide me by thy Inspirations, I paid not due Respect to thy Counsels, but refused to follow the holy Paths which thy Charity shew'd me. Pardon me, O holy Angel, for the bad Use I made of thy Favours; pardon me my numberless Infidelities: May thy Zeal for my Salvation, engage thee to ask Mercy for me before the Throne of God where thou assistest. I want thy Protection more than ever, seeing I am soon to appear there to hear the Sentence that will decide my Doom. Continue, I beseech thee, to be there my Defender; present there my Pains, Tears, Sighs and Prayers; grant by thy powerful Credit that the Tribunal of my Judge may be propitious to me the Moment that thou conductest

Exodus
xxiii,

conductest my Soul thither; redouble, I *St. Max-*
 pray thee, thy Care in her Favour; protect *im.*
 her in the hard and violent Conflicts that she
 is to sustain against the Pains of Death, and
 Powers of Hell; disperse the Spirits of Dark- *St. Epbr.*
 ness, permit not that they should present
 themselves before me to trouble the Peace
 of my Soul by their horrible Visions, and
 threatening Figures; be her faithful Guide in
 the terrible Journey which she is to make
 from Time to Eternity; obtain Courage for *St. Audo-*
 her to walk with thee in those Ways which *in. in vita*
 are unknown to her, and where she so much *St. Eligii.*
 fears to enter; destroy in her that Appre-
 hension so little conformable to her Interest,
 and the Orders of God who calls her out of
 this World: Ease her Disquiets by shewing
 her Heaven; yet signify to her that she can-
 not get there but by accepting Death with
 the same Sentiments her Saviour had, in sub-
 mitting to it on the Cross; that is to say, I
 ought after his Example, to offer myself as a
 Victim, to honour the supreme Majesty of
 God, and appease his Anger by the volun-
 tary Dissolution of my Body: Take there-
 fore, O my charitable Protector, Compas-
 sion on my Weakness; raise my Courage to
 make the Ordinances of God triumph over
 the Sentiments of Nature, animate me to
 discharge myself of the heavy Load of car- *St. Aug.*
 nal Desires out of Love for my God; vouch-
 safe that I may be mindful of nothing but
 his Pleasure, and that I may be content to
 die, because he so ordains it.

Come then, my good Angel, come as soon as possible to break my Chains and finish the Hardships of my Passage; advance, if possible, the End of my Exile; deliver my Soul from the Servitude of this Body, of which the Miseries incessantly increase; withdraw her from the Obscurity of this Prison where she has so long groan'd, and carry her into the celestial Kingdom, of which the Inhabitants enjoy an immutable and everlasting Liberty.

O faithful Companion of my Pilgrimage in this Life: O charitable Assistant of my Labours in the Way of Salvation; thou, whose glorious Title of Servant of Jesus, Christ our common Master, forms with me so happy and salutary an Union, give Testimony to this Divine Saviour of my last Dispositions, and join thy Prayers to mine, to beg his Grace that I may be enabled to finish my Days in these Christian Sentiments with which he inspires me; obtain from his Mercy, that my Soul, at her Departure from my Body, may go to rest in Peace; that by expiring in Rest, I may Sleep, the Sleep of Death, that this Rest may be secure, and this Security eternal.

St. Aug.



THE
DOCTRINE
OF THE
HOLY FATHERS,
ON
HEAVEN, HELL.
and PURGATORY.

Printed in the Year M.DCCXLVII.

DOCTRINE

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TO THE

READER.



THE Motive of collecting the following Sentences was to repress the Licentiousness with which some People speak of a future State, to the great Scandal of the Weak, and Detriment of Christianity in General. Besides, the Volleys of Oaths, Curses and Imprecations echoing in every Street and utter'd in publick and private Companies, even by such as one would think ought to be convinc'd of the dismal Consequence of them; give me Room to believe that their Faith is dead, if not intirely corrupted, with regard to the Happiness or Miseries of the other World: For surely no Christian in his Senses would wish Damnation to himself, as is frequently done, or even to his greatest Enemy, if his Faith was intire and lively with Respect to the everlasting Joys of Heaven, and

and eternal Horror, Confusion and Pains of Hell. As for Purgatory it is made so little of by some, that you will often hear them say, they would be glad to get there; because then their Salvation would be secure: Others tell you they would rather suffer there than here; and their Ignorance, not to say Wickedness, carry a great many of them so far as not to read the Psalter of Jesus, because, in one of its Petitions, we beg of God to grant us here our Purgatory, not considering that the Souls there detain'd bear the Weight of God's Justice as the Damn'd do in Hell: With this Difference, that the Pains of Hell are eternal and those of Purgatory but temporary. In order therefore to open the Eyes of their Faith, with Reference to the three above-mention'd Places, *viz.* Heaven, Hell and Purgatory, I set before them the constant Tradition of the Catholick Church thereupon, as couch'd in the Writings of the Holy Fathers, and if it should have the desired Effect on my Reader, I shall look upon myself as well rewarded for my Trouble.




THE



THE
DOCTRINE
OF THE
HOLY FATHERS,
On HEAVEN, HELL and
PURGATORY,

In Eighty five short SENTENCES,
faithfully collected from the Ori-
ginals.

HEAVEN.

- I.  HEAVEN is a Place of Sere- *Gilbertus.*
nity, and a Paradise of Plea- *Porret.*
sures. *Serm. xxvii. Sup. Cant.*
2. Heaven is the Seat *Hugo. a.*
of God, the Place of Angels *St. Victore.*
and Holy Souls. *Lib. iv. de Propriet. cap. 3.*
3. In the heavenly Kingdom there will be no *St. Aug.*
Sorrow, no Labour there, no Pain, no Death,
but a perpetual Health always perseveres.
4. There

4. There no Malice arises, no Misery of the Body, no Infirmary, no Necessity at all.

5. There will be no Hunger there, no Thirst, no Cold, no Heat, no Weariness of Fasting, no Temptation of the Enemy, no Will to Sin, no Possibility of offending, but Joy and Exultation will possess all.

6. Nothing more magnificent than this Kingdom, nothing more glorious, nothing more bright, nothing more fair, nothing more true, nothing more sincere than that Goodness, nothing more copious than that Abundance. *de Vanitate Seculi. cap. 2. antemedium, Pag. 647. lit. a. Tom. ix.*

7. O holy City, O fair City! Whatever is in thee, is all fair, sweet, pleasant: It is one good, and all good is in it. . . . Whatever good I can name all is there. All there contemplate, all rejoice, all delight in God, whose Aspect is holy, whose Face is resplendent, and Discourse sweet: He is delightful to behold, sweet to possess, it pleases always to behold him, always to have him, always to enjoy him, and delight in him. *de Spiritu & Anima. cap. 57.*

8. Let us contemplate what the Choirs of Angels are, what the Society of Holy Spirits, what the Majesty of the Vision of God is: None in this Life can sufficiently consider how great the Happiness is to see God Face to Face; how great the Sweetness is to hear that angelical Melody, how great the Pleasure is to enjoy the Company of the Saints, *ibid.*

9. All Happiness, all Sweetness, all Pleasure, all Charms, all Beauty is there. What
ever

ever is agreeable, whatever delights is there; that is to say, all Riches and Delights, all Rest and Comfort are there. *Ibid.*

10. O vital Life, happy Life, secure Life, quiet Life, fair Life, unspotted Life, chaste Life, holy Life, Life exempt from Death, void of Sorrow, Life without Spot, without Pain, without Anxiety, without Corruption, Life without Confusion, without Vicissitude and Change, Life most full of all Elegance and Dignity. *In Medit. cap. 22.*

11. O most happy Life! O Kingdom truly happy, void of Death, without End: Where there is a continual Day without Night, where there is no contradicting Adversary, no Allurement of Sin, where there is a perfect Love and no Fear, where there is an eternal Day, where God is seen Face to Face, and the Mind is plentifully satisfied with this Food of Life. *Ibid.*

12. There are heard Choirs of Angels singing Hymns; there the Society of heavenly Citizens, there the Solemnity of all returning to Joy from this sorrowful Pilgrimage.

13. There the Choir of inspired Prophets, there the glorious Company of the twelve Apostles, there the conquering Army of innumerable Martyrs, there the sacred Assembly of holy Confessors, there the true and perfect Monks, there holy Women, who overcame the Pleasures of the World and the Weakness of their Sex: The Glory of each is different, but the Joy of all is common, *Ibid. cap. 25.*

14. There

14. There the Understanding is without Error, the Memory without Forgetfulness, the Thought without Distraction, Charity without Dissimulation..... Strength without Weakness, Health without Pain, Life without Death, Facility without Impediment, Fullness without Loathing, and a perfect Health without Distemper. *de Diligenda Deo. cap. 18.*

15. There is infinite Joy without Sadness..... Light without Darkness, Life without Death, all Good without any Evil. There Youth never grows old, Life knows no End, Beauty never fades, Love never grows cold, Health never decays, Joy never decreases, because there the chief Good is in our Possession. *de Soliloq. Animæ. cap. 35.*

16. Run fast the right Way, for it leads you to your Country: To that Country, whose Citizens are the Angels, whose Temple is God, whose Splendor is the Son, whose Charity is the Holy Ghost: Holy City, happy City: Where it delights to see God, to live with God, to live of God. *de Cantico Novo. cap. 10.*

17. There are so many and great Joys there, that all the Arithmeticians in this World could not number them: Nor all the Geometricians measure, nor Gramarians, Logicians, Rhetoricians, or Divines explain them. *Lib. vii. Compen. Theolog. Veritat. cap. 31.*

18. God will be there a Mirror to the Sight, a Harp to the Hearing, Honey to the Taste, Balm to the Smelling, *Ibid.*

19. In that heavenly Court the Plenitude of all Good is perfectly in all. There the Virgin

Virgin will rejoice seeing the Merit of the holy Widow. The Widow will exult for the Privilege of Chastity bestow'd upon the Virgin. The Confessor will be delighted with the Triumph of the Martyr. The Martyr will leap for Joy for the Prize gain'd by the Confessor. The Prophet will praise the Patriarch for his pious Conversation. The Patriarch will be transported with Joy for the Faith and Fore-knowledge of the Prophets. The Apostles and Angels will rejoice for the Merit of all their Inferiors. All the Inferiors will be glad for the Glory and Crown of their Superiors. *in Soliq. cap. 4.*

20. The Rewards of the Saints are so great, that they cannot be measured. So manifold, that they cannot be number'd. So copious, that they cannot be bounded. So precious, that they cannot be valued. *Lib. vii. Compen. Theolog. Veritat. cap. 31.*

21. If we but consider what and how great the Things are, which are promised to us in Heaven, all earthly Things become despicable to us. *St. Greg. Hom. xxxvii. Sup. Evang. Mag.*

22. The Way to Heaven is narrow to the Few that chuse it, but easy to All that love it. *Serm. ix. de Verbis Dom. St. Aug.*

23. Neither the Glory of this World, the Multitude of Riches, the Nobility of Birth, Science, Wisdom, nor Eloquence bring us to the Kingdom of Heaven; but Grace, Virtues and Good-works. *Serm. xxiii. ad Fratr. in Eremito.*

24. If we are willing to attain Heaven, it is absolutely necessary that we should mortify

St. Greg. Mag. tify the Passions of the Flesh. *Lib. iv. in primum. Reg. cap. 5.*

25. The Kingdom of Heaven suffers Violence: Unless thou dost Violence to thyself, thou shalt not obtain it. *Ep. xxii. ad Eustach.*

26. There are different Mansions in the Kingdom of Heaven suitable to the Merits of every one: For the Diversity of Works, makes the Diversity of Rewards: As each one shall have distinguish'd himself here with Sanctity, so shall he shine there with Honour and Glory. *Tom. iv. Ep. 1. ad Demetr.*

27. If he is a Fool, who gives his Life for a Farthing, he is a much greater Fool, who gives eternal Life for any transitory Thing whatsoever. *Serm. ii. Dom. 12. post Pent.*

28. So great is the Beauty of eternal Light; so exorbitant the Happiness and Reward of the celestial Paradise, so exalted the Dignity of the beatifical Vision of the most glorious Trinity, that tho' we were to enjoy them but for one Hour, it would be worth our while to labour for them a thousand Years, even to the Effusion of Blood. *de Profess. Monast. Art. 5.*

H E L L.

Hugo. Card.

1. **H**ELL is a Place of Torments, where Souls are punish'd by perpetual Fire. *Sup. Num. cap. 16.*

2. In Hell the Reprobate will be saluted with the frightful Representation of all their past

past Crimes, which will be to them more bitter and tormenting than all their other Torments.

3. That Death in Hell ought rather to be *St. Aug.* call'd eternal Death than Life. Because there is no greater nor worse Death, than when Death does not die. *Lib. vi. De Civit. Dei. cap. 12.*

4. The Lake of Hell is full of Darknes, Discord, Hatred, Folly, Misery, Turpitude, Bitterness, Offence, Burning, Hunger, Thirst, inextinguishable Fire, Sadness, perpetual Revenge, and of all unspeakable Evils which cannot be express'd nor thought. *de Tripl. Habit. cap. 1.*

5. In Hell nothing is found that is desirable; in the Lake of eternal Misery nothing is seen, nothing felt, but what displeases, offends, and torments. *Ibid. Sub finem, &c.*

6. In Hell there is intolerable Hunger, Thirst, Stink, Fear, Anguish, Darknes. The Severity of the Tormentor, Presence of Devils, Ferocity of Wild Beasts, Cruelty of Executioners, gnawing of never-dying Worms. *Ibid. cap. 2.*

7. In Hell there is the Worm of Con- *St. Aug.* science, Tears of Fire, Sighs, Miseries, Pain without Remedy, Chains without being loosed, eternal Death, Punishment without End, the Absence of Christ as to his Vision, which alone exceeds all the above Torments, and is more intolerable than all other Punishments put together, *Ibid.*

8. The Food of the Damn'd is Torments, and their Mansion is with the Devil: Where there is no Consolation, but Pain, no Rest, but always Disquiet: Where there is no Refreshment,

freshment, but always Flames: Where there is no Light, but always Darkness. *Serm. iii. de Defunct.*

9. Hell is wide, and has no Bounds, it is deep, and has no bottom; it is insatiable, full of a never-abating Heat, of intolerable Stench. In that Place all Misery, Darkness, no Order, an eternal Horror, no Hope of Good, no Despair of Evil; but all Evil that can be imagin'd, will be eternally present to the Damn'd. *Serm. xxvi. ad Fratr. in Eremo.*

10. In Hell Pain perseveres that it may afflict, and Nature continues that it may feel: And therefore neither of them fails, lest Punishment should have an End. *Lib. xix. de Civit. Dei. cap. 28.*

11. In Hell Men will not be said to be before and after Death, but always in Death, and therefore never living, nor ever Dead, but dying everlastingly. *Lib. xiii. de Civit. Dei. cap. 11.*

St. Bern-
nardinus.
Senens.

12. The Fire of Hell will always kindle, and never shine, always burn and never be consumed, always affect and never End. *Sup. Apocal. cap. 15.*

St. Bern.

13. In Hell the Damn'd are to be tormented for Millions of Millions of Years, and never to be deliver'd: Where neither he that torments, is ever tired; nor he that is tormented, ever dies. There is an intolerable Pain, a horrible Fear, an abominable Stink, Death of Soul and Body, without Hope of Pardon or Mercy: But they shall so die there that they may always live, and always be dying. *Lib. Medit. cap. 3.*

14. In

14. In Hell a devouring Flame will burn those whom carnal Pleasure has polluted; and the infinitely wide Mouth of Hell devours those whom vain Glory has exalted. M. *St. Greg.*
Lib. xxvi. Moral. cap. 39.

15. Every Sinner in Hell will be wise in Punishment, who was foolish in Guilt; because being there constrain'd by Pain he will open his Eyes to Reason, which he had shut here whilst given to Pleasure. *Ibid. Lib. xxvi. cap. 22.*

16. There they pass from the Coldness of Snow, to the Heat of Fire, and both intolerable. There all are burnt, and gnaw'd and consumed with Worms; no Voice, no Sound is heard there but wo, wo, wo, wo: The Diabolical Executioners torment and are likewise tormented, and there never will be any End of, or Remedy for their Torments. Such is Hell, and a thousand times worse. *Hugo. a. St. Victore.*
Lib. iv. de Anima. cap. 13.

17. In Hell a Damn'd Soul finds a double Punishment: For he is burnt in Fire, and entirely loses the Kingdom of Heaven, which is a greater Punishment than the Torment of Flames. *Hom. xxiv. Sup. Math. St. John Chrys.*

18. The Region of Hell, is a dismal Region and much to be fear'd, a Land of Affliction, Forgetfulness, Miseries, Darkness, Whirlwind and Smoke, a Land of Malediction and Death. There is a Fire that cannot be extinguish'd: A Worm that does not die, and at the same time horrible cold. . . . There will be weeping and gnashing of Teeth, lamenting and moaning: An alternative of Evils *St. Pet. Damian.*

Evils will torture the Wicked without Pity.
Serm. lix. de S. Nicol.

St. Theoph. 19. Hell is never fill'd with the Damn'd:
Alex. But the more it receives, the more it craves.
Epist. Paschal. iii.

20. In Hell there shall be no Vice, which shall not have its proper Torment. There the Proud shall be fill'd with all Confusion; and the Covetous shall be streighten'd with most miserable Want. There one Hour of Suffering shall be more sharp than an hundred Years here spent in the most rigid Penance. *Lib. i. De Imit. Christ. cap. 24.*

St. Anselm 21. It is certain that the Wicked alone
will be tormented in Hell, and the Good alone will be cherish'd in Heaven. *de Similitud. cap. 190.*

22. As in this World two Sins abound most, Luxury and Avarice: So in Hell there are two Punishments which torment most, that is Heat and Cold. *Serm. Dom. xx. post Trinit.*

St. Aug. 23. If after as many Millions of Years as there were Hairs on the Heads of all those who have been, and shall be, the Reprobate could hope their Punishments should have an End, they would bear them much easier; but because they neither have, nor ever shall have any Hopes, they will fall into Despair, and will not be able to bear their Torments. In Hell they will see those black Monsters of Devils with their frightful Faces, they will see the Flames of Hell, and their Followers in Torments, but they never will see God, which of all Miseries is the greatest. *de Spirit. & Anim. cap. 56.*

24. Why

24. Why is Death sought for in Hell, but is not found? Because those to whom Life is offer'd in this World, but will not accept of it, in Hell seek Death, and cannot find it. *Serm. i. Dedicat. Eccles.*

25. O Death how sweet wouldst thou now be to those to whom thou hast been so bitter; there they will earnestly wish for thee alone, who have so violently hated thee alone. *Sup. Apocal. cap. 15.*

St. Bernardinus.
Senens.

26. Nothing so available for extirpating Voluptuousness from the Heart, as the continual Remembrance of Hell. *Serm. lix. de S. Nicol.*

St. Pet. Damian.

27. Seriously consider what a Misfortune it is to be excluded from the Joy of beholding God; to be deprived of the most holy Society of all the Saints; to be banish'd from the celestial Kingdom; to die to a happy Life, and live to an everlasting Death; to be expell'd into everlasting Fire with the Devil and his Angels; where their present State is an eternal Exile, and Life a Punishment to the Damn'd: Not to perceive in that Fire what enlightens, but to feel what torments; to suffer the terrible Crackings of an ever-raging Conflagration; to be blinded with the sharp Smoke of a smothering Dungeon; to be sunk in the bottom of overflowing Flames; to be torn by devouring Worms, and that during all Eternity. *Lib. iii. de Vit. Contempl. cap. 12.*

St. Prosper.

P U R G A T O R Y.

St. Bonavent.
 vent.

1. **T**HE Fire of Purgatory is a material Fire, wherein the Souls only of the Just, who have not done condign Penance and made full Satisfaction in this Life are to suffer. *Part. vii. Brevi Loq. cap. 2.*

Hugo.
 Card.

2. The Fire of Purgatory is, where what is not purged here, will be purged. *Sup. Math. cap. 3.*

Jean.
 Gers.

3. Purgatory is a Prison, wherein our Friends, and Relations are detain'd. *Part. iv. Serm. 2. pro Defunct.*

St. Vincen.
 Ferar.

4. Purgatory is a Place full of Fire, which thro' the Divine Power torments Souls more, than if they were in a fiery Furnace. *Part. i. Serm. Dom. Sexages.*

St. Amb.

5. As Gold that is made course by a Mixture of other Metals, is purged by Fire: So the Dead are cleansed by the Fire of Purgatory from the Dross, which they had contracted by worldly Actions. *Sup. Apocal. cap. 21.*

St. Anton.

6. When Souls separated from their Bodies carry any Infection along with them, they go to a Place of temporal Purgation. *Part. i. Tit. 5. cap. 5.*

7. You must know that when a Soul departs from the Body, if it be not fully purged, and free from all Fault, and Debt of Punishment, it is not fit to enter the Kingdom of Heaven: But there is a middle Place, which is call'd Purgatory, where she is order'd to suffer a temporal Purification. *Ibid. cap. 5.*

8. The

8. The Souls in Purgatory suffer four different Pains. The *First* proceeds from being deprived of the Vision of God for a time. The *Second* from the Insults and Sight of the Devil. The *Third* from the Torments of material Fire. The *Fourth* from the Consideration of their being neglected on Earth. *Ibid. cap. 5.*

9. As under the same Fire Gold shines, and Straw smokes: So the same Fire both torments the Reprobate, and purges the Elect. *Part. i. Tit. 8. cap. 1.*

10. Altho' the Fire of Purgatory be not St. *Aug.* Eternal, yet it is violent to a wonderful Degree: For it surpasses all the Pains, which any one has ever suffer'd in this Life. . . . So great Pain never was suffer'd in the Flesh as in Purgatory, tho' the Martyrs have suffer'd wonderful Torments, and a great many wicked Persons have suffer'd exquisite Punishments. *de vera & falsa Pœnit. cap. 18.*

11. That Fire of Purgatory will be more vehement, than any Pains that can be seen, thought of, or felt in this Life. *Serm. iv. pro. Defunct.*

12. To leave this earthly Habitation, and St. *Bern.* not yet to obtain the heavenly Habitation is an intolerable Affliction, and an inconsolable Grief. *In Declamat. circa Med. Fol. 312.*

13. There are three Places allotted to the Souls of the Dead, according to the Diversity of their Merits. Hell, Purgatory and Heaven: Hell for the Wicked, Purgatory for those that are to be purified, Heaven for the perfect. Because the first cannot be de-

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liver'd.

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The DOCTRINE of the

liver'd, the third want no Deliverance; it remains therefore, that we should descend to the second by Compassion for those who were once our Brethren in the Flesh. *Serm. de quinque Negotiat.*

St. Bonavent.

14. He that is in the State of Salvation, and does not sufficiently punish himself in this Life, shall suffer the Fire of Purgatory, whether he will or no. *Serm. i. de S. Laurent.*

15. The Pain of the Fire of Purgatory is greater than any thing that can be borne in this Life: And is moreover of a longer Duration, and more fruitless than any temporal Pain. *Ibid.*

16. The Pain of Purgatory is much greater than any Pains which the Soul can suffer whilst now join'd to the Flesh. *Sup. Lib. iv. Cent.*

St. Cyril.
Hierosol.

17. If all the Pains, Torments, and Afflictions, which can be thought of in this World be compared to the least Pain in Purgatory, they are rather Comforts than otherwise. If any living Person had experienced those Pains he would rather be tormented without Remission to the End of the World, with all the Pains which Men have suffer'd from Adam to this Day, than to suffer one Day in Purgatory the least Pain that is there. *Epist. ad Augustin. de Min. divi Hieron.*

18. The Pains of Hell and Purgatory are in no wise different, because they are the same with regard to the Violence of them, but in this alone, that the Pains of Hell have no End, and the Pains of Purgatory have. *Ibid.*

19. I

19. I look upon the transitory Fire of Purgatory to be more intolerable than all the Tribulations of this Life. *Sup. Psal. vii. Pœnit.* St. Greg. Mag.

20. We ought firmly to believe, that no Sin is left unpunish'd: For either every Man blots out his Sins by Penance, or the Lord piously purifies him by his Rod in this Life, or he will be purged after Death in the Fire of Purgatory, or descend into everlasting Fire. *Lib. iv. de Anima. cap. 17.* Hugo. a St. Victore.

21. There is great Tribulation in the World, but there will be greater in Purgatory, and the greatest of all in Hell. *Sup. Apocal. cap. 7.* Hugo. Card.

22. O Lord punish me not in the Fire of Purgatory, wherein there will be such a vehement Conflagration, that thou wilt seem to be enraged: Since the least Pain that is in Purgatory is look'd upon greater than any Pain whatsoever in this Life. *Sup. Psal. xxxvii.* St. Innoc. 111.

23. If the Sinner delay to do Penance in this present Life, he will be adjudged either to a severe and dreadful Penance in Purgatory, or to a fruitless and horrible Repentance in Hell. *In Prima Lect. de Pœnit. Part. iv.* Joan. Gers.

24. He that will not cultivate his Vineyard, that is to say, cleanse his Soul, but will let it be over-run with Thorns and Brambles, shall have his Land accursed in this Life, and after it will suffer either the Fire of Purgatory, or eternal Punishment. *Lib. ii. de Genes.* St. Aug.

25. For two Reasons the Soul departing from the Body suffers the Pains of Purgatory,

tory, either because she dies in Venial Sins, or that she has not fully satisfied for the Punishment due to her Sins, and yet dies in the State of Grace. *Part. i. Tit. 8. cap. 1.*

St. Albert.

Mag.

26. We ought to have a true Compassion for the Souls in Purgatory, that God may be pleased to deliver them from the most rigorous Pains which they suffer. *de Paradiso Animæ. Part. i.*

St. Aug.

27. Let every Body take Care so to correct his Faults here, that after Death he may not be obliged to suffer the Pains of Purgatory. *de vera & falsa Pœnit. cap. 18.*

28. O Lord, purify me in this Life, and render me such, that there may be no need of a purging Fire in the other. *Sup. Psal. xxxvii.*

St. Bruno.

29. Many will be punish'd with the Pains of Purgatory even to the Day of Judgment. *Sup. Psal. vi.*

Joan.

Trick.

30. Let none of you say, as a great many ignorant People usually say: It is enough for me, if my Soul gets into Purgatory. Believe me, Brethren, who ever speaks this from his Heart, does not consider what Purgatory is. He does not know what he asks who desires Purgatory. He is deservedly to be accounted as the most foolish of all Men, who when he might have made Satisfaction to God for his Sins in this Life, defers it to the Life to come. *Lib. i. Hom. 13. ad Monachos.*

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